The Long Shadow of the Industrial Revolution:

Political Geography and the Representation of the Left

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Chapter 1

Introduction

> The antagonism between town and country begins with the transition from barbarism to civilization, from tribe to state, from locality to nation, and runs through the whole history of civilization to the present day.
>
> Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, The German Ideology

1.1 Introduction

Ever since democracy left the confines of the city-state, it has been characterized by conflicts between urban and rural dwellers. Hundreds of years later, after the industrial revolution and the dramatic growth of cities, this basic fault line still divides democracies. This book will show that in many countries around the world, political preferences and voting behavior are highly correlated with population density.

Perhaps the most obvious manifestation is that in settings ranging from U.S. to Iranian presidential elections, it is clear that issues related to religion and moral values are quite relevant in electoral politics, and urban dwellers tend to be more secular, tolerant, and what might be termed "cosmopolitan."

Moreover, on issues related to government taxation, public goods, and redistribution, in many societies the industrial revolution has created a legacy such that voters with the strongest preferences for activist government are concentrated in neighborhoods where dense, affordable housing was constructed for an industrial workforce of wage laborers in the era before the spread of automobile ownership. Even where the initial factories are long gone, the legacy of industrialization lives on in the built environment. The urban landscape of Boston triple-deckers or London council houses is home to low-income groups and minorities whose preferences on economic issues place them on the far left of the political spectrum. And quite aside from preferences that flow

from income or occupation, even wealthier residents of densely populated areas often appear to have greater demands for government-funded public goods and risk-sharing schemes than residents of sparsely populated areas.

Of course it is well understood that political preferences of individuals are not randomly distributed in space. In the parlance of spatial statistics, preferences are spatially correlated, and Waldo Tobler's (1970) so-called "first law of geography" rings true: "Everything is related to everything else, but near things are more related than distant things." Any observer of politics knows intuitively that the correlation between the preferences of randomly drawn individuals in a society will probably be a function of the geographic distance between their residential or workplace addresses.

Yet if individual political preferences are spatially dependent in this way, and we observe an aggregate correlation between population density and preferences, the implications are potentially profound for countries like the United States and Britain that organize parliamentary representation around relatively compact, contiguous, equal-population winner-take all districts. A randomly selected urban resident would not only be more likely to possess leftist political views than a randomly selected rural resident, but if Tobler's simple claim holds true, the urban individual's nearest neighbor—say a resident of the same apartment building—is likely to have more similar political views than the nearest neighbor of the rural resident–perhaps someone living a mile away on a rural rout. In a very dense city, the urban leftist's 1000th nearest neighbor might still be spatially proximate and part of the same social milieu, while the 1000th nearest neighbor for the rural conservative may well be part of a completely different community: perhaps a college town, suburb, or even a small city.

As a result, when these individuals are aggregated into districts, a striking pattern can emerge: the most urban districts tend to be homogeneous and leftist, and the non-urban districts, while relatively conservative, tend to be more heterogeneous. When two parties compete with this type of underlying political geography, we can expect the party of the left to rack up more surplus votes in the districts it wins than the party of the right. To use a concrete example, while Democrats typically win more than 75 percent of the presidential vote in the 20 or so Congressional districts containing many of the largest cities in the United States, there is not a single districteven in rural Texasthat regularly provides such a large margin for the Republicans.

Indeed, this book will show that for much of the 20th century, in Britain and its former colonies, parties of the left have won more "surplus" votes in their dominant urban districts than have the parties of the right in their largely suburban and rural strongholds. As a result, in order to win 50 percent of the seats, leftist parties in democracies using single-member districts have typically needed to win more than 50 percent of the vote.

Electoral bias is an interesting question, especially for those who study electoral systems. But beyond

that small group, perhaps electoral bias should only be a concern for political operatives in leftist parties and election-night media pundits. If one buys into the median voter model—the dominant paradigm of the formal theory literature on electoral competition—it is not immediately clear that electoral bias should have any impact on policy. Yet this book suggests that the relative geographic concentration of the left matters not only for the translation of votes to seats, but under some conditions, also for the translation of preferences to policies. When we see that a very large number of votes goes to parties of the left in urban districts, perhaps this implies not only that they are more homogeneous than other districts, but also that the ideology of the far-left urban districts is further from the national median than that of the far-right rural districts. In this case, the political geography of urbanization would create an asymmetry in the distribution of preferences across districts. Due to the concentration of leftists in cities, voter preferences might be arranged across districts such that the ideology of the median voter in the country as a whole is to the left of the preferences of the median voter in the median district. If this is the case, under most plausible theories about how parties set their platforms and implement them once in office, policies would be pushed subtly toward the right, even if the parties of the left are able win elections and form governments.

Building on these ideas, this book documents some rather striking facts about the distribution of political preferences and voting behavior across winner-take-all electoral districts in industrialized societies. It shows that the urbanization associated with the industrial revolution created an economic and political geography that had profound implications for political competition throughout much of the 20th century. This book's arguments about the geographic distribution of preferences and partisanship help explain some of the troubles of labor parties in Britain and its former colonies in the early part of the 20th century, both in adopting winning platforms and transforming votes to seats. Moreover, it helps explain why the Democrats in the United States are good at winning control of the legislature but bad at assembling a workable legislative coalition to support a leftist agenda.

In short, the book introduces a rather provocative argument: because of electoral geography, small, compact winner-take-all districts in industrial societies have been quite good for parties of the right. Some version of this story has been around since the observations of Rydon (XX), Johnston (XX), and the classic treatment of Gudgin and Taylor (XX). Yet it has received remarkably little attention, and to my knowledge, this book is the first systematic cross-country theoretical and empirical examination of the phenomenon. The data presented in the chapters that follow reveal that electoral bias in the 20th century has overwhelmingly favored the parties of the right in industrialized societies with small majoritarian districts, though this effect has been steadily declining in recent years in some countries, most notably in Great Britain. At least since World War II, this

has had nothing to do with malapportionment (asymmetries in the population size of districts), and nothing to do with geographic asymmetries in turnout. Quite simply, it is driven by the fact that left-wing voters are more geographically concentrated than right-wing voters.

Moreover, this book moves well beyond previous literature by exploring the possibility that electoral geography also has an impact on policies. Ultimately, the geographic legacy of the industrial revolution might help explain the common observation that countries with single-member districts ended the 20th century with smaller welfare states and lower levels of redistribution than countries with proportional representation.

1.2 The Impact of the Industrial Revolution

1.2.1 The importance of the Industrial Revolution

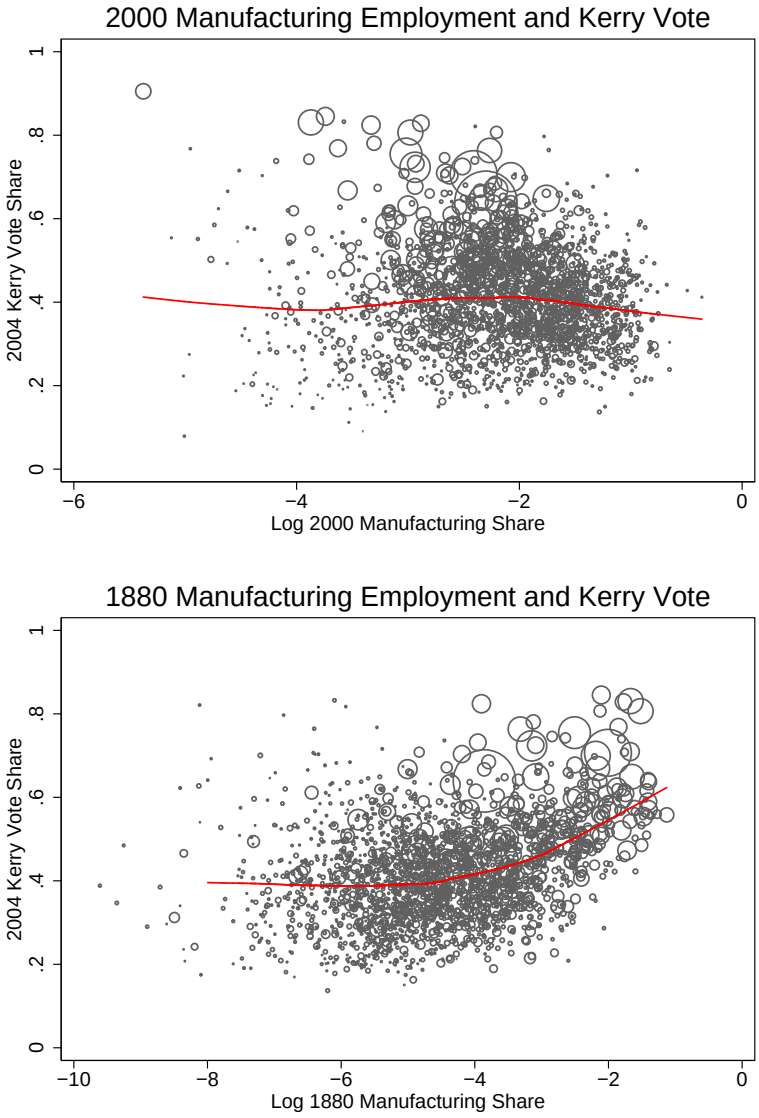
A key claim in this book is that long-lasting features of politics, including electoral rules and the nature of party competition, were shaped by the geographic patterns associated with the dramatic transformation of societies that occurred in the 1800s and early 1900s as part of the industrial revolution. Moreover, I argue that the industrial revolution is not ancient history. It shapes our everyday lives in ways that we seldom appreciate. The basic architecture of the built environment in which many of us live and work was laid out and constructed during an era of iron, steel, textiles, and steam. This book will argue that in industrialized societies, partisanship is distributed in geographic space even today in ways that were shaped directly by the urban form that emerged during industrialization.

At first glance, this might seem like an outmoded claim. Manufacturing employment and labor union membership have fallen off dramatically, and manufacturing and other heavy industry rarely takes place in the same physical location as in the heyday of the industrial revolution. In many countries, it is possible to identify a "rust belt" where urban agglomerations are littered with hulks of long-closed foundries and steel mills. The idea of an urban "proletariat" seems increasingly anachronistic, and by most accounts, class voting has been declining over time (Dalton XX). Moreover, our cities seem to have been transformed by suburbanization and the growth of so-called "edge cities" and exurbs that are of much more recent vintage. And very recently, some of the old industrial city centers have been reborn as centers of nightlife, culture, and consumption.

Indeed, the geography of manufacturing today seems to have nothing to do with the geography of electoral outcomes. The first panel of Figure 1.1 plots the county-level vote share of John Kerry in the 2004 presidential election against manufacturing as a share of total county-level employment in the 2000 census. The size of the bubbles in the graph correspond to the population size of the county in the 2000 census. In spite of Kerry's

fondness for appearing in a Carhart workingman's jacket and his firm support from Bruce Springsteen, his support was no higher in manufacturing counties than elsewhere.

Figure 1.1: County-level manufacturing employment and John Kerry's vote share in the 2004 presidential election



Yet the second panel plots the county-level 2004 Kerry vote against manufacturing employment in the census of 1880. The relationship is remarkably strong. The counties in which smelters, foundries, and mills were operating in the late 1800s constitute the electoral base of Democrats today, even though the smelters and mills of Ohio now operate only in Springsteen's historical ballads. By looking at the bubbles, one can also get a sense that the counties with the highest population, and also the highest population density, clearly favored

Kerry over Bush by very large margins. As we will learn, the geographic support distribution has a similar look for Labor parties in Australia, New Zealand, and the UK, as well as the Social Democratic parties of continental Europe.

What explains this? Does working-class solidarity linger, along with the pollution, in the air of Cleveland or Manchester? Rather than the air, this book looks for the answer in the bricks, mortar, wood, and concrete of the housing built for workers, and the larger patterns of urban settlement that emerged with industrialization. The industrial revolution ushered in a great migration associated with the development of large-scale factories and associated mining and shipping operations. Peasants, agricultural workers, and former slaves migrated to accept work as wage laborers in factories, docks, and mines. Because of the many advantages of co-location during this era, factories tended to be highly concentrated in space. In most of the burgeoning industrial agglomerations of the 19th century, workers had neither the time nor the resources to commute, and dense working-class housing was constructed in proximity to factories.

In North America, industrialization and the growth of cities went hand in hand, and both factories and working-class housing were constructed very close to transportation hubs like lake and ocean ports and railroad junctions, and these were often directly in the city centers. In Europe, where many cities were already relatively large before the industrial revolution, the factories and dense working-class housing were built on the outskirts of the cities in so-called “red belts” or satellite towns. Often, entire suburbs were dominated by a single firm, such as Siemensstadt outside Berlin and the Renault works in Boulogne outside Paris. A similar pattern can be found in the great cities of Latin America, which industrialized later. Moreover, in addition to transportation points, dense agglomerations of new factories and working class housing also sprung up in previously low-population regions around resource points, like coal or metal ore mines.

By the beginning of the 21st century, much of the manufacturing and mining activity of the 19th and early 20th centuries was long gone. Yet key features of the built environmentthat is, the large apartment buildings, terrace houses, triple-deckers, and workers’ cottagesdid not disappear. Even though jobs shifted to newer manufacturing enterprises and the service sector, from Detroit to London’s East End, the dense, affordable working-class housing associated with early industrialization continued to attract poor migrants. Moreover, a process of suburbanization, whereby high-income families took advantage of advances in transportation technology in order to live in lower density away from the crowded city centers, took hold virtually everywhere.

These basic features of urban form structured the rise of working class parties and the strategies they adopted in the early 20th century. This is the focus of Chapter 2. They also structured longer-term patterns of political competition in the period from World War I to the present, which are taken up in chapter 3.

1.2.2 Industrialization and the Geographic Dilemma of Electoral Socialism

While the colonies in North America and Australasia developed full male franchise (at least for white settlers) much earlier, elections in England and continental Europe were conducted with a much more limited franchise during the initial industrialization of the 1800s and early 1900s. Proportional representation was, at this point, still a rather fanciful idea, and elections were conducted through small, plurality districts.

Chapter two shows that as industrial workers gradually entered the electorate in Europe, they did so in a very geographically concentrated way. Often they were clustered within a relatively small number of dramatically under-represented urban constituencies. Given their tight, uncomfortable living quarters and often-inhumane working conditions, urban workers were ripe for mobilization by socialist political entrepreneurs. Once they gained the franchise, either through street protests or by gradually surpassing income and property requirements, the rapidly growing urban working class was able to elect representatives of the new socialist parties to parliaments. In so doing, they squeezed out the incumbent politicians from the old, established parties in the urban districts. In a few cases, like Scandinavia, these were the conservatives. But in many others, like Belgium and the Netherlands, they were the liberals that had initially pushed for the expansion of the franchise.

Guided by a simple model of partisan entry in a multi-jurisdiction system of political competition, chapter two explains how proportional representation emerged in Europe as a response of urban incumbents from the old parties who were fearful of losing their seats to socialists, and in some cases, as a response of geographically concentrated socialists who were dramatically under-represented under plurality electoral systems.

For the most part, proportional representation was a boon for the left. Though urban socialist incumbents were loath to give up the safe seats they had built up and cede authority to party leaders, PR had the long-term benefit for leftist parties and their supporters that it resolved the emerging geographic dilemma of the left that is at the heart of this book. If the base of the mainstream leftist party is highly concentrated in densely populated places, and that base is quite ideologically distinct from the rest of the country, the party occupies a precarious position with small winner-take-all districts. If it moves to the right in order to drive out centrist parties and form a legislative majority, it invites entry by a far-left party in the core urban districts. But if it caters only to its urban base, it runs the risk of winning huge majorities in its core districts while wining an insufficient seat share to form a legislative majority.

Proportional representation can resolve that dilemma. Under highly proportional forms of PR with large districts, a vote is a vote no matter where it is located in space, and as long as the districts are sufficiently large relative to industrial agglomerations, or there is a national upper tier for achieving overall proportionality, it simply does not matter if left-wing voters are more geographically concentrated than right-wing voters.

Yet a number of industrialized democracies did not switch to proportional representation in the early 20th century. Indeed, these are the countries that receive the lion's share of attention in this book. Why did these countries follow a different trajectory? More importantly for this book, if plurality electoral rules harm the left, why don't leftist parties adopt proportional representation when they have the opportunity?

When new socialist or workers' parties appeared on the scene in the era of rapid industrialization, chapter two reveals that there was a very common coordination problem among leftists. As workers' parties began to compete in the urban areas formerly dominated by liberals, they ran the risk that by failing to coordinate, they would hand districts to the minority conservatives. The need to coordinate with liberals was a thorn in the side of leftist parties throughout Europe, and chapter two argues that a desire to vanquish the liberals and dominate the left was an important part of the reason why some socialists began to favor the retention of plurality districts. The benefits of proportional representation were difficult to see: it would rescue the liberals and perhaps invite the entry of communists.

Moreover, another recurring theme of this book is that what is good for individual incumbents within a political party is not necessarily what is good for the party as a whole. We will see a number of instances in which the interests of left-wing voters, and even the collective interests of the party, would benefit from a switch to proportional representation, or at least a thorough redistricting, but reform is not consistent with the individual incentives of the party's legislative incumbents.

The rest of this book is, then, about the consequences over the next century of that fateful set of events in the early 20th century that left some countries with an old-fashioned, pre-industrial set of electoral institutions: Britain, Australia, Canada, the United States, France (off and on), and New Zealand (until the 1990s).

1.2.3 Cities and the Left in the 20th Century

The industrial revolution was important not only in creating an urban, industrial proletariat, and hence workers' parties, but also through its lasting impact on the built environment. Chapter Three reveals that a common pattern has emerged in many urban agglomerations around the world: the poor tend to live in higher density than the rich. Socialist and workers' parties emerged in the late 19th and early 20th centuries in the dense working-class districts, and in most cases their electoral base has been among the urban poor ever since.

Yet income and social class are only one part of the story. In many societies, even controlling for income, residents of large cities in the 20th century have been more likely to vote for parties of the left than suburban or rural dwellers. There are many plausible explanations for this, but chapter 3 uses survey evidence to suggest that a non-trivial part of this can be explained by the distinctive preferences of urban residents on non-economic

issues related to religious versus secular values. Indeed, a cleavage between secular cities and religious rural areas preceded the industrial revolution, and continues to be an important part of party competition in a large number of countries. Perhaps because of a non-economic issue dimension, many wealthy voters in Europe's fashionable cities, as well as the wave of young high-income voters that have reclaimed some of North America's 19th century city centers like Chicago, San Francisco, and Toronto, vote as reliably for the left as poor urban workers in Manchester or Cleveland.

Putting these facts together, chapter three makes the case that in industrialized societies, with some exceptions, the mainstream parties of the left are inescapably urban parties. Votes for the parties of the left tend to be highly concentrated in space in densely populated urban corridors.

To most readers, this will be intuitive and perhaps unremarkable. Yet some remarkable things happen when we consider that in some counties, legislative representation takes place through winner-take-all electoral districts that are drawn on top of this geography.

1.3 Distortions in Democratic Representation

1.3.1 The Geographic Roots of Electoral and Policy Bias

Building on some classic insights from British and Commonwealth political geography, chapter four argues that when compact and contiguous winner-take-all districts are superimposed on the urban geography of partisanship described in chapter three, the party of the left will be at a disadvantage in the transformation of votes to seats because its supporters are inefficiently clustered in homogeneous urban districts that it wins with large majorities, while votes for the right are more efficiently spread over moderately- and sparsely-populated districts. The chapter concludes with data analysis based on district-level results of elections from several countries since World War I.

Chapter 5 moves beyond the distribution of votes across districts, and focuses instead on the underlying distribution of political preferences. It explores a possibility initially raised in chapter two: perhaps an additional legacy of urban form in the shadow of the industrial revolution is that there is a long left tail in the distribution not only of votes across districts, but also in the distribution of median district preferences. Under this scenario, the difficulties of mainstream leftist parties are not limited to the transformation of votes to seats. Such parties would also face more strident internal divisions between ideological "purists" and moderates within the party, and chapter five lays out a logic whereby if the party must choose a single, uniform platform throughout the country, the urban "purists" can influence the platform in a way that makes it difficult for the party to win

majorities. This means that with plurality electoral districts, the party of the left might be at a long-term disadvantage not only because it occasionally loses elections in spite of winning a majority of the votes, but also because it finds it difficult to adopt a winning platform in the first place. Perhaps more important from a normative standpoint, chapter five also implies that with small, winner-take all districts, the policy platforms offered by political parties would veer to the right of the preferences of the national median voter.

However, chapter five also points out a silver lining of a left-skewed inter-district distribution of ideology for the mainstream leftist party. Unfavorable economic conditions, unpopular wars, or scandals might prolong the "time in the wilderness" for the left by leaving them with a platform that is too heavily influenced by the radical urban left. However, such events, when they work to the left's advantage, can lead them to pick up a relatively large number of seats to the right of the national median and give them a rather large majority if they are able to offer a competitive platform. With a left-skewed distribution, there is a relatively large density of seats just to the right of the national median, and hence within reach for the left during good times. Conversely, when the party of the right benefits from exogenous "valence shocks" that allow it to pick up districts to the left of the national median, their gains will be smaller because too many seats are out of reach in the left tail of the distribution.

In other words, with a left skew in the distribution of preferences across districts, the vote-seat curve may have a subtly different shape than commonly assumed. The left might be able to expect less than 50 percent of the seats with 50 percent of the vote, but when it achieves a larger majority of the popular vote than the right, it might expect to receive a larger "winner's bonus."

It is rather difficult to measure preferences at the district level, but chapter five concludes with some data analysis drawn from a combination of surveys and district-level demographic data. The estimates should be approached with caution, but they provide at least some preliminary evidence consistent with the claim that urban districts create a left skew in the distribution of political preferences across districts.

1.3.2 Implications for Party Competition in Majoritarian Democracies

The next three chapters take a closer look at the implications of the foregoing theoretical analysis. I make a distinction between parliamentary and presidential systems because parties in parliamentary systems tend to adopt a uniform national platform, whereas legislative candidates in a presidential system like the United States have considerably more leeway to deviate from the national platform.

In Great Britain, New Zealand, and Australia, for much of the 20th century, Labor parties had to deal with contentious internal battles between radical trade unionists of the urban core and moderates who aimed to

capture the pivotal non-urban districts. In each country, this fissure led to the occasional formation of splinter parties. When Labor parties' platforms are captured by the representatives of the urban core, the party runs the risk of either a splinter party competing in the moderate districts, a prolonged "time in the wilderness," or both. Recently, with demographic shifts and the declining influence of labor unions, labor parties in each of these countries have successfully moderated their platforms in order to win the pivotal suburban constituencies, but in some cases this has opened the door to entry by new parties positioned to their left in the urban districts. Taken together, these implications of electoral geography help explain why Labor parties in countries with plurality districts have so often found themselves in the opposition in the 20th century, and when they do achieve success, it is generally accompanied by deep consternation and disillusion among leftists.

While apparently characterized by a similar underlying geography of preferences, the North American federations display different variations on the same theme. As first discussed in chapter 2, neither Canada nor the United States developed a successful socialist or workers' party in the early part of the century. Unlike their counterparts in the UK and New Zealand, the Canadian Liberals survived the industrial revolution and the growth of an urban working class. For much of the first part of the century, they were able to monopolize the left side of the political spectrum in an era without pronounced class politics. Eventually, however, after the Great Depression, they could not stave off entry on their left. But unlike Liberals in other industrialized countries, they were able to survive and even thrive by ceding the extreme left districts to the NDP and focusing on the center. Chapter 6 argues that this strategy was successful in large part because of the Liberals' unusual history of domination in Quebec. Chapter 6 also follows up on some of the book's key arguments by conducting separate analysis of the provinces, which provide useful variation in industrialization, urban form, and the geography of preferences.

Chapter 7 examines the United States. The lack of a parliamentary no-confidence procedure allows individual legislative candidates much greater flexibility to tailor their platforms to the preferences of their districts. There is rather strong evidence that the urban geography of the industrial revolution produced a left skew in the distribution of preferences across districts in the United States, but the implications for party competition are different than in the parliamentary systems. In parliamentary systems, the relatively large ideological distance between the industrial working class districts and the national median district created intense battles over the platform of the leftist party, which manifested itself sometimes in fissures and third-party entry, and at other times in the adoption of inefficient platforms. In contrast, in the United States, the geographic legacy of the industrial revolution is a party of the "left" that adopts an exceptionally broad and incoherent platform. Given the importance of incumbency bias, voting based on candidate characteristics rather than party label, and the

flexibility of party platforms in a presidential system, one must work a bit harder to conceptualize and measure electoral bias in the United States, but Chapter 7 demonstrates that underlying pro-Republican bias is quit stubborn in elections to both the U.S. Congress and the state legislatures of the industrialized states.

Nevertheless, chapter 7 also reveals that the "silver lining" of a left-skewed preference distribution discussed in Chapter 5 is especially beneficial for the Democrats. Given the greater platform flexibility associated with presidentialism, the Democrats are able to compete quite effectively in districts to the right of the national median, as evidenced by their tradition of victories in House districts that are carried by Republican presidential candidates. When the Democrats benefit from fortuitous events, such as economic distress or unpopular wars under Republican presidents, they can make impressive gains in "Republican" districts. The advantages of incumbency can then allow them to hold onto a share of these districts for a surprisingly long time.

Thus in spite of their excessively concentrated support base, the Democrats have managed to control the United States Congress for much of the post-war period. However, what is good for Democratic Congressional candidates may not be particularly good for voters with leftist preferences. If Democrats control the Congress, they preside over an unwieldy coalition of urban leftists, suburban moderates, and even some rural conservatives.

1.3.3 Implications for Policy in the Long Run

The precise manifestation of the geographic dilemma of electoral socialism is different in each country, but the leitmotiv is the same. The distribution of leftists across districts causes the left to have one, or some combination of the following problems: either they lose elections repeatedly with a platform that is too far left, fragment into rival leftist parties that suffer from a costly coordination problem, or win with platforms that are unrecognizable to the urban left.

An important counterfactual is to conduct elections with a single national district, either through a winner-take all executive election like the French or Latin American presidencies or an American gubernatorial election, or through proportional representation with a national upper tier.

In some cases, constitutional designers have provided a nice natural experiment by allowing the same people to be simultaneously governed under both institutions. This leads to the hypothesis that, for instance, American presidents, and in some large industrialized states, their governors and senators, are pushed to adopt policy platforms that are slightly to the left of the median among the legislators. Evidence to this effect is provided in Chapter 7. A related discovery is made in chapter 6: within state delegations, the Australian Labor party typically has better representation in the Senate, which uses statewide proportional representation, than the lower chamber, which uses single-member districts.

It is tempting to move beyond these quasi-experimental opportunities, and explore some bolder claims about the impact of single-member districts on long-term policy differences across countries. The difference in the policy profiles of countries that use SMD and countries that use proportional representation has been widely recognized in the literature (Iversen and Soskice XX, Jusko XX, Persson and Tabellini XX, others). The analysis in this book leads to the obvious question: what if Britain and its former colonies had adopted proportional representation in the early 20th century? What if Germany, the Netherlands, and the Scandinavian countries had retained the systems of small, single-member districts with which they began the 20th century? Would the Anglophone countries have developed larger welfare states and more generous systems of redistribution? Would continental Europe have retained more of the elite-dominated policies that characterized the early 20th century?

Of course there is no way to address this question in a satisfactory way with the observational data that history has bestowed on us. Nevertheless, with a full retinue of caveats and warnings, chapter 8 engages in some cross-national analysis of redistribution and welfare expenditures, with the goal of moving beyond the usual ways of dealing with electoral rules in cross-county empirical analysis. Building on the analysis conducted earlier in the book, it builds various cross-national measures that attempt to serve as proxies for right bias in the translation of preferences to policies in a broader group of countries. It shows that controlling for a variety of other factors, these measures are associated with lower levels of welfare expenditure and redistribution. Though one should be very circumspect about making causal claims with such highly aggregate data and so few observations, the cross-country data appear to be more consistent with the political geography story told in this book than with other competing explanations.

Chapter 2

The Geographic Dilemma of Electoral Socialism

2.1 Introduction

> Given the minority status of workers, leaders of class-based parties must choose between a party homogeneous in its class appeal but sentenced to perpetual electoral defeats or a party that struggles for electoral success at the cost of diluting its class orientation.
>
> Przeworski and Sprague (1986), page 3.

In their classic book, Paper Stones, Przeworski and Sprague argue that socialist, social democratic, labor, and communist parties face an inexorable dilemma in industrial societies: even in the era of heavy industrialization, workers have never made up a majority of the electorate, and strictly speaking, workers' parties cannot achieve legislative majorities. Thus they must either maintain their ideological purity, aiming to influence policy by coalescing with other parties in the legislature, or they must broaden their electoral base considerably beyond the industrial working class.

One of the central arguments of this book is that this dilemma of electoral socialism is sharpened by the geography of industrialization. Because of the importance of agglomeration and urbanization economies in the era of industrialization, non-agricultural workers have always been highly concentrated in space. Thus if parliamentary representation is based on elections held in compact plurality districts, workers are likely to be concentrated in well under half of the districts.

The best place to begin this story is with the process of rapid industrialization in the 19th century, and the

initial electoral mobilization of workers by leaders of labor unions and left-wing political parties. Though much has changed since the late 19th and early 20th centuries, citizens of advanced industrial societies still inhabit the basic landscape—the structure of cities, party systems, and electoral systems—that was created during that period.

The goal of this chapter is to explain how the initial electoral mobilization of the geographically concentrated industrial working class shaped both party and electoral systems in the early 20th century. In the late 19th century, representation in virtually all elected legislatures was based on some form of plurality elections in small districts. This chapter explains how the extraordinary economic and demographic transformations associated with the industrial revolution and World War I altered the preexisting system of political competition in those districts. I argue that it is useful to think about the industrial revolution, and the associated rise of labor unions, as bringing about a shift in the distribution of political preferences within and across districts. Specifically, I suggest that an ideological gap opened up between a group of urban "proletarian" districts, which generally comprised less than half of all districts, and the rest of the country.

This framework helps explains why the initial entry of new left-wing parties in urban districts generated coordination problems, splits, and intense battles over party platforms among both the preexisting Liberal parties and the new Socialist or Workers' parties. The entry of new left-wing parties in urban districts also had an additional impact: it created parliamentary majorities in favor of a shift to proportional representation in most of continental Europe, but not in France, Britain, and its former colonies. This chapter explains why the strongest advocates of proportional representation were urban incumbents from the preexisting "bourgeois" parties—most often the Liberals, but in some cases the Conservatives—whose parliamentary careers were threatened by incursions from socialists, as well as leaders of socialist parties themselves, who often suffered from dramatic under-representation in the legislature due to their excessive concentration in large urban districts.

Thus in much of continental Europe, the burgeoning geographic dilemma of electoral socialism was nipped in the bud by the adoption of proportional representation. In these countries, the relative geographic concentration of leftists eventually became a non-issue. In another group of countries—on whom the remainder of the book is focused—plurality electoral systems remained in place for the rest of the 20th century. An important goal of this chapter is to set up the rest of the book by explaining why the wave of electoral reform in the early 20th century did not reach these countries. In North America, union leaders spurned the burgeoning socialist parties in the early 20th century, and socialists posed little threat in the urban districts. Thus legislators in the existing parties had no incentives to promote electoral reform. In the UK and New Zealand, workers' parties entered and eventually gained the support of labor leaders, and by World War I, they were vying to squeeze out

the Liberals in an attempt to monopolize the left. While Liberals eventually came to the same realization made by their brethren in continental Europe—that proportional representation would be their only salvation—this understanding came too late. Thereafter, electoral reform was not in the interest of a majority of sitting incumbents in workers' parties. In Australia, this type of battle was avoided altogether because a workers' party came to dominate the left from the very moment of confederation.

This account of the emergence of proportional representation is distinct from the existing literature. The traditional argument is that franchise expansion was pushing socialists close to the majority threshold throughout the country, and the old bourgeois parties faced a coordination dilemma, which they resolved by instituting proportional representation (Braunias 1932, Rokkan 1970, Boix 1999). An alternative account is provided by Alesina and Glaeser (2004), who characterize proportional representation as a direct response to the revolutionary agitation of socialists. In both of these stories, and also in this chapter, a strong and successful socialist party is a necessary condition for electoral reform in the early 20th century. For Alesina and Glaeser it is also a sufficient condition. In this chapter, the successful entry of a workers' party is necessary but not sufficient for a switch to proportional representation. In fact, a key claim of this chapter is that if a workers' party gains strength and experiences electoral success under plurality rule, it will develop a strong internal constituency for the retention of winner-take-all districts.

This insight becomes important as a foundation for the rest of the book. The retention of single-member districts does not imply a weak or disoriented workers' movement, as often implied in the literature. In several countries, a victorious workers' party actively fought for the retention of single-member districts. They did this not because plurality electoral rules were best for the class interests of workers, or even for the interests of the party in transforming votes to seats. Rather, given the relatively large ideological distance between the core urban districts and the national median district, the plurality system was appealing to urban incumbents who presided over safe seats, as well as party leaders who feared that proportional representation would give a foothold to breakaway leftist parties, or allow for a resurgence of the liberals.

This will be an important lesson going forward. Even if plurality electoral rules are bad for leftist ideologues, they may be in the interest of sitting parliamentarians and even leaders in leftist parties.

This chapter proceeds as follows. First, it briefly reviews the existing literature on the choice of electoral rules in the early 20th century. Second, it introduces the geography of industrialization and the rise of the industrial working class, pointing out implications for the distribution of political preferences within and across districts. Third, it introduces a theoretical framework for understanding the preferences of parties, understood as unitary actors, over party platforms and electoral rules in response to the changes brought on by urbanization

and industrialization. Next, it relaxes the assumption that parties are unitary actors, and examines the incentives of incumbent politicians within parties. Then, it builds on the key insights of these theoretical approaches to understand electoral reform in the early 20th century, focusing first on countries that adopted proportional representation, and then on those that did not.

2.2 Why did Europe adopt PR? The traditional perspective

During the period from around 1890 to 1920, most European countries dramatically expanded the franchise to include the working class, abolished plural voting for the wealthy, and reduced the power of the landed gentry in undemocratic upper legislative chambers. During the same period, the vast majority of these countries replaced electoral systems featuring a large number of small, winner-take-all districts with some version of proportional representation. At least since Braunias (1932), scholars have drawn a connection between these transformations. The prevailing explanation for the rise of European proportional representation is that it was a survival strategy of established political parties from the earlier era of elite democracy. In the face of street protests, and especially after the sacrifice of the First World War, it was no longer possible to deny the franchise to the poor. But the old parties faced the danger of electoral annihilation at the hands of the socialists, which would only be compounded by majoritarian electoral institutions, especially in the presence of a fractured right. Thus it was the old elite parties together who became the champions of proportional representation as an "institutional safeguard" (Colomer, 2004: 187) against a rising left empowered by universal franchise.

Braunias' argument, modestly expanded by Rokkan (1970) and further refined by Boix (1999), is often repeated in descriptive histories of electoral regimes as common wisdom (e.g. Colomer 2004; Schneider 2007). Yet the argument has always had an uncomfortable relationship with certain facts. Above all, as a bulwark against the left, proportional representation can only be viewed as a colossal failure. Left-wing parties enjoyed marked improvements in seat shares in European parliaments immediately after the introduction of proportional representation, and as we shall see in later chapters, they have spent more of the subsequent years taking part in governments than have their comrades in other OECD countries that did not adopt PR (Iversen and Soskice 2006; Powell 2002). Moreover, PR has been associated with larger government (Persson and Tabellini 2003) and more redistribution in the postwar era of the welfare state (Iversen and Soskice 2006).

This book will go on to show that in various ways, majoritarian electoral institutions have been kind to the parties of the right, and perhaps even the class interests of property owners and capitalists. Yet this insight does not require the benefit of 100 years of hindsight. In the early years, proportional representation was part

of the platform of most socialist or workers' parties in Europe (Penads 2008). Once the European socialists decided to participate in elections and abide by the rules of the democratic game, by far the most important goal was the achievement of full and equal franchise and the abolition of undemocratic upper chambers, but after considerable debate, many socialist theorists also agreed, at least initially, that proportional representation was the best electoral scheme for the representation of workers' interests. We will return to this debate shortly.

Noticing the frequent appearance of proportional representation in the platforms of socialist parties, Alesina and Glaeser (2004) present a strikingly different reading of European history than Braunias. Noting that proportional representation was adopted in countries like Belgium, Sweden, and Germany following periods of urban unrest and riots organized by Socialists, they conclude that proportional representation, much like the expansion of the franchise itself, was a direct response to the muscle of revolutionary leftists, who understood proportional representation to be in their interest.

Could it possibly be true that the socialists and their bourgeois enemies both simultaneously believed that the same electoral institution would be their salvation? If so, who was misguided, and why?

A central goal of this chapter is to sort out these contending claims by focusing on the political geography associated with the industrial revolution. We will end up with a story that shares some of the key features of the traditional perspective, but with some important twists. But first, it is necessary to take a closer look at the theoretical argument behind the traditional perspective.

It would seem that property owners in late 19th century Europe had much to fear. Socialists appeared to be well organized and capable of calling massive strikes or instigating violence. As socialists decided to pursue revolution through the ballot box rather than the streets, they steadily gained votes, even in an era of property and income requirement that prevented most workers from voting. In the typical story, property owners resisted the expansion of the franchise as long as possible, believing that Socialist parties would either win majorities in all districts, or split the votes of the propertied classes such that socialists could win without a majority. Either way, when forced by events beyond their control to expand the franchise, it was in the collective interest of the parties representing the wealthy to institute proportional representation so as to preserve some influence for themselves.

This is the crux of the story told by Braunias (1932). In the same vein, two heavily cited pages of Rokkan (1971) suggest that parties of the property-owning classes resorted to proportional representation because "inherited hostility and distrust," for instance between Liberals and Catholics, prevented them from making "common cause against the rising working-class movement" (158). There is a tension in this argument. Rokkan suggests that the wealthy would have been better off in the long run with single-member districts, implying that

socialists were not, in fact, threatening to cross the majority threshold in most districts. But if this is the case, it is not clear why any of the bourgeois parties would have stood to benefit from the introduction of proportional representation.

Boix (1999) attempts to resolve this puzzle by presenting a model of the representative district under limited franchise, where the platforms of the bourgeois parties are distributed symmetrically around the median voter. When the franchise increases and the socialists enter on the left, they can choose a platform such that the votes of the right are split exactly in half, and the property-owners cannot coordinate, thus handing the district to the socialists. Anticipating that the socialists will obtain a huge majority of seats with less than half the votes, the bourgeois parties both have an incentive to switch to proportional representation, where they will at least have a share of seats equal to their share of the vote, and though it is not clear in Boix's treatment, presumably a higher probability of being part of a governing coalition than under the majoritarian system.

This argument applies most directly to single-round, winner-take-all elections. An obvious complication is that in most European cases, multi-round elections would have afforded the right an opportunity to coordinate in the final round (Cusack, Iversen, and Soskice 2007). Boix (1999) reasons that in this case, the parties realize that they face imminent extinction with probability .5, and risk-aversion induces them to choose PR.

The Boix framework leaves a number of questions unanswered. Above all, it is not clear where the party platforms come from, and thus it is not clear why strategic parties would adopt some of the platforms in the scenarios Boix lays out. Since the party leaders' objective functions are evidently dominated by gaining seats rather than minimizing the distance between government policy and the ideal points of their constituents, it is not clear why the bourgeois parties cannot alleviate their problem by simply nudging their platforms to the left, or why the Socialists would ever adopt the extreme leftist platform that Boix uses to characterize a "weak" left.

The biggest problem with the traditional perspective is its implicit assumption that electoral competition can be understood as taking place in one homogeneous district. For instance, under the exact model considered by Boix with multi-round elections (the majority of European countries at the turn of the century), if each district is evenly split between the Liberals and Conservatives, the party on which the property-owners coordinate is determined by a coin flip in each district, and the probability of losing the coordination game in every single district is extremely low. Moreover, as detailed below, it was very common during this period for parties facing coordination problems to form informal alliances and trade districts in which to withdraw.

Even more awkward, however, is the assumption of inter-district homogeneity. To argue that the Socialists were poised on the threshold of victory in all or even most districts is to make the same mistake made by Marx and Engels in The Communist Manifesto, where socialism was described as the movement of the "immense

majority," with a proletariat that encompassed "all but a handful of exploiters" (1967: 147). Late in the 19th century, based on the steady growth of the German SPD, Engels was willing to predict that the party would be "the decisive power in the land, before which all other power will have to bow" before the turn of the century (1960, 22). The traditional view of proportional representation as a bulwark against socialism accepts this rhetoric at face value, and assumes that by the outbreak of World War I, the Socialists were poised to win majorities (Braunias 1932), or at least pluralities (Boix 1999), in all districts if only they could gain the franchise.

Yet as Przeworski and Sprague (1986) document, this dream was all but dead only a few years later. The Socialists learned that they could win large majorities among manual workers, but these did not come close to encompassing a majority of the population. When socialist parties sought out support among middle-class groups, they faced strong opposition and often entry by communist parties on their left flank. The dilemma of electoral socialism described by Przeworski and Sprague had a geographic expression that is almost completely absent in the traditional literature: The new industrial proletariat, and hence the threat of electoral socialism around the turn of the century, were highly concentrated in space.

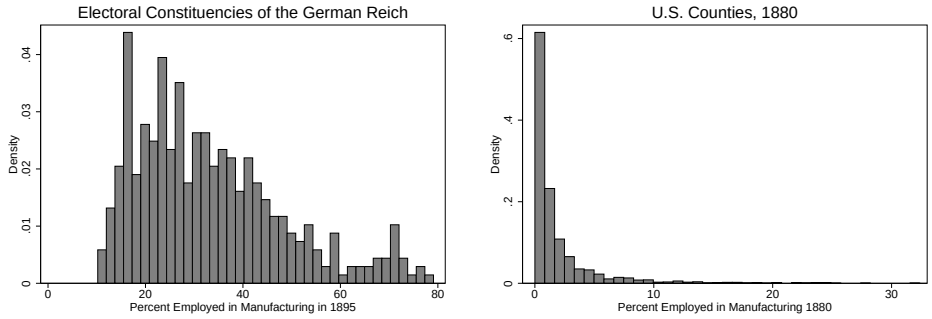
2.3 Industrialization and the geographic distribution of partisanship

2.3.1 The geographic concentration of the working class

Beginning with Alfred Marshall (XX) and continuing through the recent contributions of Krugman (XX) and Venables (XX), there is a large literature in economic geography explaining why industrial activity tends to be concentrated in space. Some key factors include transportation costs, labor market pooling, markets for specialized inputs, and technological spillovers. Cities exist in large part because proximity is advantageous, and urbanization promotes a variety of positive externalities. "Localization" effects create advantages for co-location within specific industries, and "urbanization" effects create more generic advantages for large and diverse cities. Because of these factors, industrial activity is generally quite concentrated in certain regions, and this was especially true in the early 20th century (citations). Moreover, as we will explore in greater detail in the next chapter, industrial enterprises were tightly clustered within regions, and in an era when workers had neither the time nor the resources for lengthy intra-urban commuting, dense working-class housing was constructed in close proximity to factories. As large factories were constructed in the late 1800s and early 1900s, the cities of Europe, North America, and Australasia were transformed by the influx of a new class of industrial workers.

Another way to comprehend the geographic concentration of industry around the turn of the century is with

histograms of manufacturing employment, displayed in Figure 2.1.



(a) Distribution of manufacturing employment across electoral districts of the German Reich, 1895

(b) Distribution of manufacturing employment across U.S. Counties, 1880

Figure 2.1: Manufacturing employment in 19th century USA and Germany

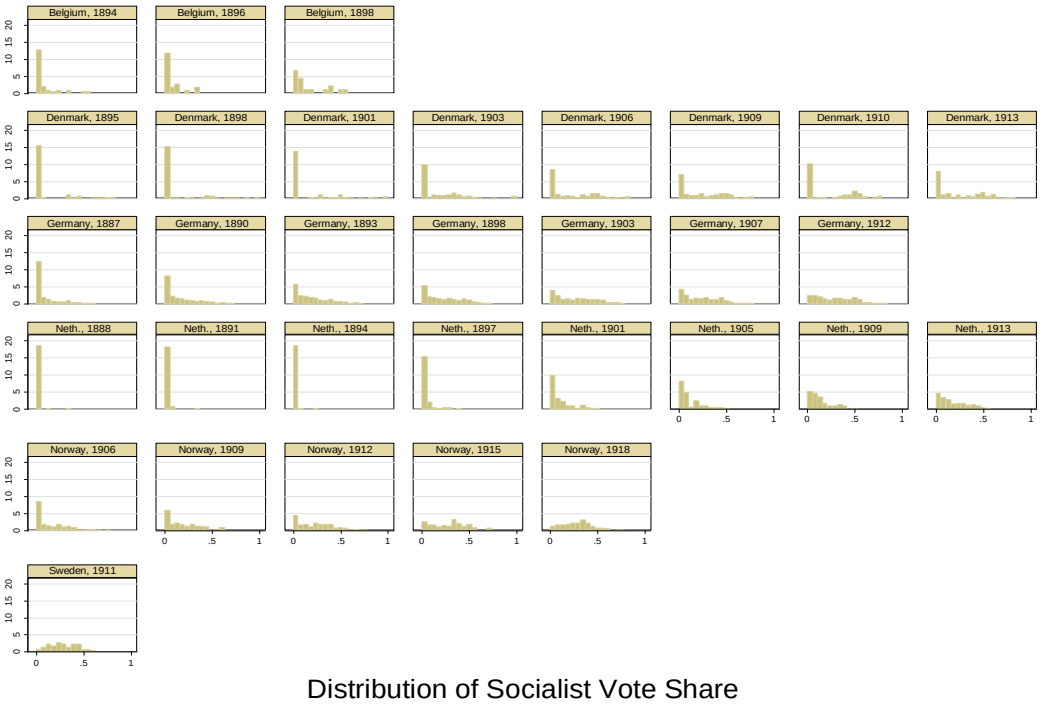
The right-skewed distributions in Figure 2.1 demonstrate that manufacturing workers were highly concentrated within German electoral districts and U.S. counties. For instance, while workers made up XX percent of the German population, they constituted majorities in only XX percent of the districts. A similar pattern undoubtedly characterized the other industrializing countries at the time.

2.3.2 Implications for political competition

As men and women poured from the countryside into the new urban-industrial agglomerations, they were the targets of mobilization efforts first by labor union organizers and eventually socialist party organizers. As indicated by the famous Marxist characterization of peasants as "potatoes in a sack" and the emphasis in the Communist Manifesto on the importance of cities in rescuing the population from the "idiocy of rural life," working class districts were recognized by socialist leaders as absolutely essential for the development of class consciousness.

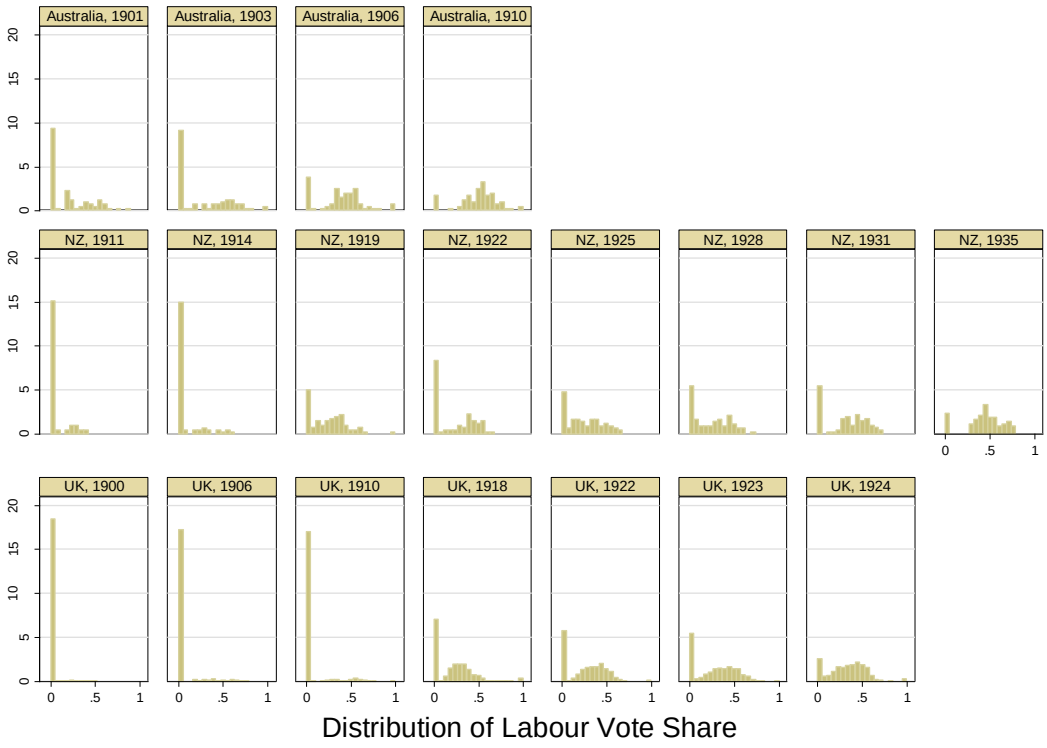
In countries with limited franchise, universal suffrage was a very powerful rallying cry for socialists. In many cases, labor unions initially endorsed the preexisting liberal party, which often advocated limited suffrage expansion. As skilled workers gradually surpassed income and property hurdles and gained the franchise, in countries without a two-round ballot, liberals appealed to the logic of strategic voting, warning that votes for socialist or workers' parties in urban districts would divide the left and allow conservatives to win. Eventually, however, union leaders switched their endorsements to socialists, and with the support of labor unions, and often through some combination of conflict and coordination with liberal parties, a handful of socialists entered parliaments in the most industrialized districts in several European countries.

Figure 2.2: The entry of socialists



This was usually a gradual process over several elections. To see this, it is useful to examine the geographic distribution of the vote shares of socialists as they entered electoral politics in several European countries. Figure 2.2 displays histograms of the distribution of vote shares of workers' or Socialist parties for all European countries for which reliable district-level data were available in the years leading up to the adoption of proportional representation. Figure 2.3 presents the same data for Labor parties in three countries that did not adopt proportional representation. Note that Canada and the United States are missing from Figure 2.3 because, quite simply, the badly splintered socialist parties were not able to attract the endorsement of union leaders, and were quite ineffective in legislative elections.

Figure 2.3: The entry of Labor parties



First, the histograms show that when the new leftist parties began contesting elections, they initially competed in very few seats. In the initial year, there is a large density at zero, and socialists only obtain a non-trivial share of the vote in a very small number of districts. In each country, the large density at zero slowly falls over time and the distribution becomes less right-skewed, but only in Norway does it go away by the end of World War I. As discussed below, some of the observations of zero socialist vote share are due to strategic coordination with Liberals, but nevertheless, it is clear that the support for Socialists was quite geographically concentrated in districts with large working-class populations. The vast majority of these districts encompassed densely populated urban industrial areas, though they also included some districts with mines, ports, and commercial fishing operations.

Moreover, there were very few districts in all of Europe where the socialist vote share exceeded 50 percent. As discussed further below, votes were generally divided across non-socialist parties within districts such that it was often possible to win districts with vote shares in the range of 30 to 40 percent (add a footnote with data), but it is clear that in the early 20th century, while socialists were gaining strength and diversifying their support base, they only threatened the old parties in a limited number of "proletarian" districts. Note that it is true even in Germany and Denmark, which had equal, universal male franchise through the entire period.

This is a stark contrast with the traditional perspective outlined above. European electoral maps were not being painted uniformly red. With 40 years of competition under universal franchise, the German SPD was the most established and probably the most geographically diversified European socialist party on the eve of World War I. The SPD gained success in densely populated industrialized and mining districts, but found it difficult to extend that support base outside the industrial core, and impossible to make inroads in rural areas.

The political geography of European countries during this period looked similar, with a few variations. Figure 2.2 reveals that socialists did achieve a more diverse regional support base in Scandinavia, but in general, the socialists had right-skewed inter-district support distributions, with the right tail corresponding to heavy industry and mining regions.

2.3.3 The geographic distribution of political preferences

In subsequent chapters, I will argue that it is important not to confuse the distribution of partisanship with that of ideology, but it seems relatively safe to conclude that Figures 2.2 and 2.3 reflect a substantial change in the distribution of political preferences across districts among eligible voters. Three things were happening in this era. First, immigration from urban to rural areas was happening everywhere, and in most cases, electoral districts were not being reapportioned. Second, franchise expansions were occurring in some countries, though universal male franchise was already in place in others. Finally, among the new migrants, socialists were molding public opinion and evoking a new form of collective identification among urban workers, at least outside of North America.

Prior to the arrival of an enfranchised and politicized urban industrial class, parties competed over issues like the role of the monarchy and the church, prohibition, and tariffs. As the working class grew, the franchise itself became an important electoral issue, and as socialist parties formed, held international conferences, and began to agitate for radical transformation of society, something like the modern "left-right" economic issue dimension related to taxation, redistribution, and government involvement in the economy began to emerge as the most salient policy dimension.

It is useful to think about individuals as having ideal points along this issue dimension, and we might think about those individuals as being distributed across a continuum of districts. Generally, there was a preexisting liberal party with a platform to the left of the Conservative party.

Figure 2.4: Hypothetical distribution of preferences

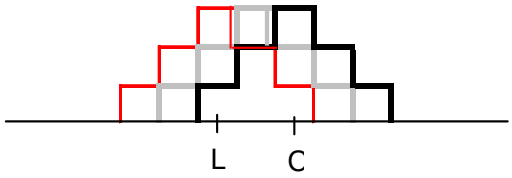


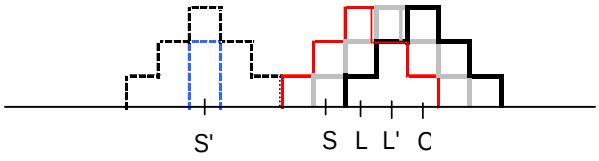
Figure 2.4 displays a hypothetical distribution of voters within and across three types of districts. Each histogram represents the distribution of voters within the left-most district (in red), the centrist district (in gray), and the right-most district (in black). In this hypothetical example, there is a symmetric distribution of voters within districts, and a symmetric distribution of district medians. The left-most districts are the core support regions of the liberals, the right-most districts are the core support regions of the conservatives, and they battle most intensely over the pivotal centrist districts.

This is a reasonable way to think of many of the democracies (or quasi-democracies) of the mid-19th century. Then, as urban districts swell with wage laborers who are mobilized by labor unions and eventually join the electorate, we might think of a new group of voters being added with preferences that are substantially to the left of the existing distribution.

Figure 2.5 shows first a small handful of workers—the dotted blue histogram—joining the electorate on the far left. As long as the number of leftist workers is small, as with the dotted blue histogram, there is no way for them to alter the median preference in any of the districts. As industrialization proceeds, we might think of this left part of the ideological spectrum as gradually filling in, or in the case of large franchise expansions, suddenly filling in, until workers comprise around one third of the electorate—a figure that roughly corresponds to the

average estimates of workers, as defined by Przeworski and Sprague (1986, chapter 2), as share of the electorate around the turn of the century. This eventuality is captured in Figure 2.4 with the dotted black histogram.

Figure 2.5: Hypothetical distribution of preferences



The key insight of this chapter is that these workers were not evenly distributed across districts, as presumed in the traditional literature. Rather, they entered the electorate in the districts that comprised the industrial agglomerations, and in the vast majority of cases, the districts were not redrawn.

In Figure 2.5, if we simply attach the entire histogram of newly enfranchised leftist workers to only one of the existing districts, the median of that district will be pulled leftward, to M', and the distribution of district median preferences begins to demonstrate an asymmetry, with a larger ideological distance between the leftmost district and the center than between the rightmost district and the center.

Of course industrialization need not generate this type of distribution if industrial workers are more evenly spread across districts, or if the preferences of the industrial working class are not as extreme as represented in Figure 2.5. For instance, perhaps it is the case that union leaders and workers were less responsive to the rallying cries of socialists in immigrant societies like the United States and Canada because labor was scarcer and wages higher than in Europe. But if workers enter the electorate with sufficient geographic concentration and political entrepreneurs convince them to adopt a sufficiently leftist ideology, the result will be a left-skewed distribution of preferences across districts.

Of course without detailed survey data, we will never know the shape of the inter-district preference distribution around the turn of the century, but the clues given above by the histograms of manufacturing employment

and the distribution of socialist votes do seem to suggest that the industrial working class, and the radical left, were quite geographically concentrated in many countries in the early 20th century.

Later chapters will explore the ways in which this geographic distribution creates a long-term challenge for leftists in countries that retain majoritarian electoral systems. But first, it is important to understand how the entry of working-class voters and the mobilization efforts of socialists led a number of countries to do away with these electoral systems and replace them with proportional representation. As socialists began to compete in urban districts, they threatened the electoral survival of the incumbent politicians in those districts, and in some cases, the very survival of entire parties. Anticipating their imminent demise, these actors became tireless advocates of proportional representation.

2.4 Electoral competition in heterogeneous districts and the entry of Socialists

2.4.1 Theoretical approaches

In order to understand the complex electoral dynamics culminating in several countries adopting proportional representation in the early 20th century, it is useful to build on the structure introduced above. First, we might view parties as unitary actors who are primarily interested in political power. Given a changing distribution of preferences within and across districts, under what conditions do new parties enter, and how do the old parties react? Some of the options available to the parties include the formation of alliances with other parties, changes in the party platform, and finally, a change in electoral rules.

However, a view of parties as unitary actors interested in maximizing seats or the probability of forming a government sometimes obscures more than it illuminates. As we will see, political parties, especially in the early 20th century, do not always behave cohesively. Parties often have intense and highly consequential internal divisions over alliances, platforms, and electoral rules. Thus it sometimes makes sense to focus on individual parliamentarians rather than parties as the main actors. Since both lenses shed light on different aspects of the transformation of European party systems and electoral rules in the early 20th century, I will use both in turn.

2.4.2 Strategic parties

Stephen Callander (2005) provides a useful framework for analyzing competition between cohesive parties with heterogeneous districts. He considers a single policy space, and a continuum of voters with single-peaked

preferences, distributed symmetrically around the median in each district, and a continuum of such districts, just as in Figure 2.4 above. Voters are sincere, and vote for the party offering the platform that is closest to their ideal point in the policy space, and indifferent voters randomize equally over the set. There are n existing national parties who move first and simultaneously choose policy platforms. There is also a set of potential entrants who choose whether to compete, and if so, a policy position. If parties enter, they must choose a "one size fits all" position for each district, and they compete in each district. Potential entrants will only enter if they can win one district outright. Thus existing parties, in addition to worrying about the positions taken by each other, must worry about deterring possible entry. One of the key insights of the model is that two existing national parties will not converge to the ideal point of the median voter in the median district because they must worry about entry on their flanks. Another important insight is that with sufficient heterogeneity, it can be optimal for a party to allow entry on its flank rather than working to retain extreme districts but giving up the center, and thus it is possible for a plurality system to settle into a long-term equilibrium with multiple parties.

A modified version of this framework provides valuable insights about the transformation of the electorate around the turn of the century. In Callander's model, voters are not strategic, and in the event of the kind of district-level coordination problem emphasized by Duverger (year) and Cox (year), they do not strategically desert their preferred candidate if she is lowest-ranked in order to avoid handing the district to the least-preferred candidate. This is the right assumption for early 20th century Europe, where opinion polls did not exist and there was a high degree of uncertainty, especially with large population movements and large numbers of new voters in successive elections. However, as will be shown below, party elites clearly attempted to predict the districts in which voters would face coordination problems, and tried to solve them by forming cross-district alliances. Thus after the stage at which new parties enter (or not), let us consider a stage in which two parties can enter into credible cartels whereby they agree to trade districts in which they endorse each other's candidates, or a single party can decide not to contest specific districts if this would be to its advantage. Let us stipulate, however, that the decisions are made sequentially such that a party will not choose an ideological platform based on the expectation that it will be able to from a cartel. This would generate a time-consistency problem. Concretely, a far-right party cannot convince a centrist party to adopt a leftist platform in order to defeat the far-left party while promising not to compete in districts that, after the platform change, it can now win.

While in Callander's model the parties maximize their seat share, in order to understand the logic of cartels, let us consider a model in which they maximize their chances of forming a government. For example, a party with 40 percent of the seats prefers a scenario in which the remaining 60 percent is divided equally among two parties to one in which they are monopolized by one.

Consider a country with six districts. These districts are divided into three "types," where each type is composed of two identical districts, each containing 900 voters. The distribution of ideal points in each of the three district types is displayed in Figure 2.4. Each type of district has a different median. As before, the first type of district, D1, is displayed in red. D2 is displayed in grey, and the right-most district type, D3 is displayed in black. Each square represents 100 voters.

The equilibrium positions adopted by the conservative and liberal parties, C and L in Figure 2.5, do not converge on the median voter in the pivotal district, as in typical Downsian models, because the parties must deter entry in D1 and D3. C is an entry-deterring equilibrium because an entrant to the right of C would receive 300 votes in the D3 districts, while C receives 400. Likewise, there is not enough space for successful entry between L and C in any district. In this representation, the pivotal districts are evenly split, and L and C each expect 3 seats in the legislature.

Now let us examine what happens when industrial workers enter the electorate. The traditional literature creates a narrative in which workers received the vote and socialist parties entered the electoral arena suddenly and dramatically around World War I. This is misleading, however, since in almost all cases, socialist parties entered the legislature many years before universal franchise. As demonstrated above, socialists were able to win only a very small number of districts initially, in order to establish a platform with which to push for further franchise expansions and electoral reforms. Socialists were able to win in the era of limited franchise because property and income requirements were fixed, and economic growth and inflation started to push manual laborers above the threshold. Yet such workers were often quite concentrated in space, and the incentives and strategies of the existing parties were shaped to a large extent by where enfranchised workers could constitute majorities.

First let us consider a country where urbanization and industrialization are taking place, and initially, 400 new workers have gained the franchise, spread over two districts. They are trade unionists, and their political preferences are to the left of the existing electorate, as portrayed with the dotted blue histogram in Figure 4. These two squares represent 200 new voters, and we will consider the impact of adding them to various districts. Below we will consider larger franchise expansions that begin to fill in the dotted black distribution.

As the national preference distribution expands leftward, a crucial question is whether the Liberals will be able to capture their votes, or will be forced to allow entry by socialists. The impact of this franchise expansion depends on the number of workers as well as their residential location. First, consider 200 workers joining both of the D3 districts, so that the dotted squares now are part of the solid black histogram. The socialists would not be able to enter since there are only 200 votes to the left of L, and while this increases the liberals' vote to 400,

C can still win easily with 700 votes, and the two old parties could expect to continue splitting the legislature between them. If workers continued to gain the franchise in D3, however, the point would eventually come when socialist entry is possible, once there are more than 700 newly enfranchised workers. Instead of entering at position S in Figure 4, however, the socialists would be forced to adopt S' in order to deter entry on their left. This works out well for the liberals, who can continue to win the D1 districts while splitting the D2 districts with the conservatives. Losing their former D3 strongholds to the socialists, the conservatives' best response is to move to the left in order to occupy the median in the D2 districts, leaving each party with one third of the legislature. While the socialists would argue loudly for reapportionment to reflect the growing size of D3, no party would have strong incentives to shift to proportional representation.

However, the situation is different if the franchise expands equally in both D2 and D3 districts. Again, S cannot enter if only 200 workers gain the franchise in each district, or even 400. Once 600 workers gain the right to vote in each of the D2 and D3 districts, the socialists enter, but they are only able to split the D3 districts with the conservatives, while the liberals are able to win all of the D1 seats and split the D2 seats with the conservatives. If 800 workers gain the right to vote in each of these districts, creating essentially a bimodal distribution of preferences in these districts, the socialists would be able to win the D2 and D3 districts, leaving the liberals in firm command of the D1 districts, and the conservatives out of the legislature. If the conservatives see things heading in this direction, they face strong incentives to push for proportional representation. With majoritarian districts, they will be relegated to the status of a permanent minority. In a more realistic model with a large number of districts on a continuum, they would have a very inefficient geographic distribution of support, with their seat share falling well below their vote share. The empirical section below will show that this pattern is typical of the Scandinavian countries.

Alternatively, consider the scenario in which workers only enter in the pivotal D2 districts. If only 200 workers enter, socialists still cannot enter to the left of the liberals, which is a boon for the liberals. They gain 200 votes, and are able to win the pivotal districts and form a majority in the legislature. While C might like to move to the left in order to win the D2 districts, it is constrained by the need to deter entry on its flank in D3, an event which would also assure failure in D2. The liberals would enjoy this advantage up to the point where 600 workers gain the franchise in D2 districts, at which point the socialists would win, leaving each party with one third of the legislature. While the socialists would have an interest in redistricting, no one would have an obvious incentive to shift to proportional representation.

Next, consider a scenario where the workers initially gain the franchise only in districts that are already left-leaning, liberal strong-holds (D1). Now the liberals need to worry about entry by socialists on the left flank

in D1 districts even if only 200 workers gain the franchise. The socialists do not yet have to worry about entry on their left flank, so they can enter at S in Figure 4, and edge out liberals in the D1 districts. Alternatively, the liberals can deter entry by moving their own platform to S preemptively, but this would merely hand D2 and D3 to the conservatives, which gives them a parliamentary majority. A better strategy is to cede D1 to the socialists while moving right, to L', to shore up victory in D2, leaving D3 for the conservatives, and setting up an evenly divided parliament in which liberals will play a crucial role. Once this has happened, it doesn't matter how many new workers gain the franchise in D1. The socialists will win majorities there, while the liberals and conservatives hold on to their strongholds in D2 and D3. Ultimately, this is similar to the case in which the workers gained the franchise only in the D3 districts: a stable three-party system emerges.

Next consider a scenario where 100 newly enfranchised workers are added to each of the D1 and D2 districts. This is troubling for the Liberals. Again, if they try to move left and deter entry, they hand the government to the conservatives. If they do not change their platform, socialists enter at S and split the leftist vote (400 each, with C receiving 200), so that each party can expect one of the D1 districts. Furthermore, there are now 100 socialist voters in each of the D2 districts, which undermines the liberals and hands the conservatives a slim plurality in those districts, which when added to their comfortable victories in D3, allows them to form a government with four of six seats.

This generates an obvious coordination problem for the socialists and liberals, but it has a straightforward resolution. They can form a cartel, whereby the liberals drop out of D1 and endorse the socialist candidate, and the socialists drop out of D2 and instruct their voters to vote for the Liberals. This way, the socialists win the D1 districts and the liberals win the D2 districts, relegating the conservatives to victories only in their "core" right-wing districts. The uncertainty surrounding a three-way split is better for the socialists and liberals than a conservative government. The same thing happens if D1 and D2each gain 200 leftist voters, and the same resolution presents itself.

If a total of 400 workers gain the franchise in each of these districts, the socialists can still maintain the S platform without the entry of communists, and can win the D1 and D2 districts. The conservatives can do nothing but hold on to their D3 base, because a leftward move would encourage entry on their right flank. This squeezes the liberals out of the legislature.

However, if an additional 200 workers enter in each of these districts, the socialists must move their platform to S' in order to deter entry, and the liberals have gained some breathing room, such that they are able to win the D1 districts again, achieving a three-way split in the legislature. Yet if the electorate in these districts shifts at all further to the left, the socialists will swamp the liberals in both districts and send them to a sudden and

potentially permanent decline. This is something like the fate of the Liberals in the UK and New Zealand. A key question is whether the liberals will recognize this development while they still have sufficient legislative clout to achieve a switch to proportional representation. In both the UK and New Zealand, the Liberals adopted the cause of proportional representation a year too late, and never had the chance to save themselves.

Finally, let us consider the unlikely scenario where the industrial workers are evenly spread across all districts. First, consider what happens if 200 workers are added to each district. Socialists enter at position S, and win the D1 districts. The conservatives win the D3 districts. The Liberals are faced with the prospect of losing the D2 districts, and move their platform to L' in order to salvage a split legislature. (The conservatives cannot move there because they risk entry on the right in D3.) The same thing happens if an additional 200 workers are added. If yet another 200 workers are added (a total of 600), the socialists shift to S', but their increased strength in D2 means the best the liberals can do is split the centrist districts with the socialists, leaving them with only one district. Foreseeing this, the conservatives can withdraw their candidates from the D2 districts in order to prop up the liberals and prevent a socialist majority. Even if 800 workers are added to each district, the conservatives and liberals can cooperate by forming cartels to keep the socialists from gaining a legislative majority. Only if the franchise is doubled in each district can the socialists expect to form a government. The two old parties would agree to reciprocal strategic withdrawals in each district, splitting each district evenly with the socialists and giving them, in expectation, three of the six seats.

This is something like a multi-district version of the Boix model. The socialists are advancing uniformly to the majority threshold in each district. However, once the socialists are that strong in all districts, it is difficult to see how proportional representation would improve the lot of the old parties. At least the old parties can coordinate their strategic withdrawals under the existing system, while under PR, they would be forced to find their way in a bipolar distribution of preferences where the socialists are already in a very good position to monopolize one side of the distribution.

2.4.3 Empirical expectations based on strategic parties

This exercise has revealed several points that are worthy of empirical exploration. First, the socialists are likely to gain a foothold more rapidly, and even with a very limited franchise, in countries where industrialization takes place in strongholds of the "old" leftist party. If industrialization takes place in cities that were dominated by the right, a larger franchise expansion will be necessary for the socialists to get into the legislature.

Second, if the socialists threaten to gain representation in industrial districts formerly won by the old party of the left, the two leftist parties face a coordination problem, and will face incentives to form electoral cartels.

If this is a common pattern, we should find that the key coordination problem is actually among the anti-conservatives, not the anti-socialists. Indeed, in countries that had pre-existing liberal parties, socialists entered parliament for the first time in active cooperation with liberals. It is exactly the kind of exchange described above that helped Branting gain the first socialist seat in the Swedish legislature. In Norway, Denmark, the Netherlands, the UK, and New Zealand as well, socialist and liberal parties carefully coordinated so as not to split their votes in crucial districts, and in Belgium, the electoral system induced them to go so far as to form formal cartels with joint slates of candidates in the crucial districts. Under the most plausible scenarios, incentives for coordination on the right are weaker. The clearest case for right-wing coordination is when socialist support is evenly distributed across districts, as implicitly assumed in Boix (1999).

This logic sheds light on another interesting puzzle. While conservatives fought furiously against democratic reforms, some conservative party elites argued in favor of franchise expansions while holding fast on issues like upper chamber reform. In many of the scenarios above, the conservatives would end up no worse off after expanding the franchise without redistricting, and if the left would fail to coordinate, the split could even be to the right's advantage. While initially pushing for expansion of the franchise in order to defeat the conservatives and establish parliamentary sovereignty, the liberals were often allies of their own grave-diggers, and often turned against franchise expansions when the socialists started challenging their urban districts.

Next, this framework lays out clear predictions about preferences over electoral reforms. The most obvious observation is that as the franchise expands in an asymmetric fashion across districts due to the geographic concentration of industrial workers, socialists will suffer from dramatic electoral bias. Proportional representation with large districts would be one solution, but redistricting would achieve the same objective. In the early years with limited franchise and nascent labor unions, it can be hard for the socialists to gain a foothold against the liberals, providing a clear rationale for proportional representation. Yet if socialists expect to gain a sufficient level of success in the industrial districts under full franchise and industrialization is sufficiently widespread, the socialists might face increasing incentives to retain single-member districts and stop coordinating with liberals in order to squeeze them out and monopolize the left.

As for the old parties, they almost never have a common interest in proportional representation. If workers gain the franchise in only one type of district, or symmetrically in all districts, neither of the old parties is better off with proportional representation, though in the latter case, the parties would have to enforce rather elaborate cartels. When the franchise expands to both leftist and centrist districts, though, the liberals can feel themselves being squeezed, even if the leftward shift in the electorate is modest, and proportional representation can be a way to relieve the pressure. Thus in countries where a well-established liberal party had an urban support base,

the liberals should be the champions of proportional representation, but only after it becomes clear that they are being squeezed out by the socialists. In early stages of socialist entry, they have incentives to retain single-member districts and attempt to marginalize the socialists, coordinating strategic withdrawals as necessary to avoid accidental conservative victories.

However, a crucial question, examined more carefully below, is whether the liberals are presented with data that clarifies their predicament while they still have some leverage to extract electoral reform. In the discussion above, we have made the unrealistic assumption of full information about the emerging distribution of preferences. When this does not hold, parties can make mistakes. Finally, a large influx of workers into conservative and centrist districts might threaten to turn conservatives into a permanent minority in their former strongholds, with no way of capturing the centrist districts from the liberals. In this case, they would be better off attempting to represent the right side of the political spectrum in a proportional system.

2.4.4 Strategic individuals

This perspective yields some rich insights, but it is unsatisfying in some respects. First, it may be unrealistic, and unnecessarily complicated, to assume that parties can quickly change their platforms in response to a changing electorate. More importantly, it may also be quite unrealistic to assume that parties are unitary actors who can implement the best strategy for the party as a whole. An alternative perspective views parties as collections of individuals, where platforms and decisions about electoral rules are aggregations of the preferences of individual party members (citations). With this perspective, it is possible that internal party conflict-resolution mechanisms will not yield the platform that is best for the party as a whole. This is especially the case if parties make decisions by something like majority rule among legislative incumbents who are interest above all in the continuation of their own careers.

Individuals who have successfully gained a parliamentary seat in a plurality district might look askance at proposals for list proportional representation, which would leave their future electoral chances to the fate not only of the national electorate rather than the local electorate that is already well known to the incumbent, but would also place considerable power in the hands of the party leaders who draw up the list. Any sitting incumbent, if interested only in maximizing his own chances of reelection, would prefer proportional representation only if the probability of reelection under proportional representation exceeded that under single-member districts. This could be the case if the individual was either very confident in her ability to be near the top of the party list, or very insecure about her prospects of winning reelection under the existing rules. From this perspective, representatives in “safe” districts, where the party’s existing platform has allowed for victory with

a large majority, would have very little interest in proportional representation. On the other hand, incumbents in marginal districts with a negative outlook for the future might perceive a higher chance of reelection under proportional representation.

This perspective might be quite useful in early 20th century Europe. We have considered several scenarios in which socialists enter the electoral fray after industrialization and/or the expansion of the franchise. Now let us assume that the "old" parties are stuck with their initial platforms, C and L, and socialists are now competing in all districts with some platform to the left of L. If the entire dotted black histogram of workers gain the franchise only in one of the D1 districts and the socialists adopt the S' platform, the socialists squeeze the Liberals out of one of the D1 districts, while nothing changes in the other D1 district or in the D2 districts. Thus we might expect that in anticipation of this, only one of the three sitting Liberal parliamentarians would have an increased interest in proportional representation. At the other end of the spectrum, the entry of a large number of workers in one of the D3 districts and not the other would create a similar divide among the conservatives. This might happen if a conservative party has a traditional support base that is divided between urban and rural areas.

Alternatively, consider the entry of a large number of workers exclusively in the D2 districts. The socialists would then be in a position to win the D2 districts, threatening the electoral survival of the marginal incumbents from both of the parties, while leaving the safe seats from both parties untouched. This might create a joint interest in proportional representation among marginal members of both parties, but little interest among the safe incumbents in either party.

In short, this perspective applies the basic insight of the traditional literature on electoral reform, but to individuals at the district level rather than to national parties. Risk-averse sitting parliamentarians will begin to prefer proportional representation once the entry of socialists in their district begins to push their reelection chances below their expectation under the existing system. This will happen first to incumbents in the most predominantly urban, mining, and seaport districts. Thus we expect pressure for electoral reform within the party to begin with these incumbents, and spread within the party as the reach of socialists spreads. Party platforms will embrace PR once a majority within the party feels threatened, and as in the unitary party perspective above, we would expect to see such majorities form among parties with an urban support base. But this perspective provides an additional insight: if more than one party has a significant urban support base, we might see a cross-party coalition in favor of proportional representation as socialists enter in the proletarian districts.

Finally, this perspective also provides further insight into the preferences of the socialists themselves. If a large number of workers enter in a handful of districts so that they clearly outnumber the traditional voters, this produces a number of socialist incumbents presiding over safe seats. As with one of the traditional parties,

this would create a conflict of interest between the incumbents in the safe seats and those who are attempting to compete in the moderate districts, where socialist votes tend to be "wasted" in losses. In the strategic party perspective above, the platform of the socialists might favor plurality rules if party leaders believe they are in a position to squeeze the Liberals out of existence and monopolize the left. In this perspective, if party leaders cannot overcome the self-interest of the urban incumbents, the workers' party might adopt a position in favor of single-member districts even if this is not in the party's long-term interest.

2.5 Empirical examples of electoral reform

Each chapter of the classic narrative of electoral reform in Europe by Carstairs (1980) contains a few lines on the relationship between votes and seats in the period of electoral reform. Carstairs observes that in many cases, it appears that the parties with larger seat shares than vote shares resisted proportional representation, while those apparently suffering from electoral bias favored it. He does not explore the possible sources of these discrepancies, or illuminate any cross-country commonalities in the parties suffering from electoral bias. In related work using cross-country data, Andrews and Jackman (2005) found a correlation between the electoral threshold and the gap between the vote- and seat-shares of the largest party in the previous election, suggesting that under conditions of uncertainty, the largest party would use the vote-seat curve as a heuristic, and push for a more proportional system if its seat share had fallen beneath its vote share in the past. This is related to recent work by Calvo (2009), who makes a general argument that the entry of socialists and splits among old parties introduced new forms of electoral bias to previously stable party systems, generating incentives for electoral reform. Moving beyond these more general observations about electoral bias, the analysis above generates some specific arguments about why parties might suffer from increasing electoral bias, and develop preferences over electoral reform, as geographically concentrated industrialization unfolded in the late 19th and early 20th century.

First, the existing system should have been universally unacceptable to socialists, who were suffering from severe malapportionment as workers moved to cities and gained the franchise while the districts remained unchanged. Moreover, in cases where the socialist vote was extremely concentrated in a minority of industrial districts, they ran the risk of suffering from electoral bias associated with excessive concentration of support. However, it is also possible to envision scenarios in which industrialization is sufficiently widespread, and the right sufficiently divided, that the socialists could begin to envision success in a reapportioned winner-take-all system with small districts. Moreover, once that point comes, PR may seem unattractive if it would strengthen

the Liberals or other challengers on the left. In addition, self-interested urban incumbents might resist an electoral reform that would take away their safe seats.

Second, expansion of the franchise in former liberal strongholds and pivotal districts should lead these parties to 1) collaborate grudgingly with socialists, 2) suffer in the translation of votes to seats, and 3) eventually advocate proportional representation. If they fail to achieve proportional representation, they may be on the path to extinction. Under these conditions, a largely rural party of the right should favor the continuation of a plurality system.

Third, if the party of the right relied disproportionately on the urban elite for its support in the past, sufficient industrialization and franchise expansion could create a situation in which they are overwhelmed by a sea of workers in the urban districts, and though they continue to receive a sizable share of the vote, are unable to win seats. In this situation, the conservatives will lead the charge for proportional representation, while the liberals will prefer the retention of a majoritarian system. If incumbents from both parties are being squeezed out by socialists, we might expect to see a cross-party coalition in favor of proportional representation.

This argument calls for the analysis of district-level data from at least one election prior to the entry of socialists, up through the selection of proportional representation in continental European countries, as well as district-level data throughout the same period in countries that did not adopt proportional representation. Thus far, among countries that switched to PR, I have been able to collect appropriate data for Belgium, Denmark, the German Reichstag, the Netherlands, and Norway. Among countries that retained winner-take-all districts, I examine data from Australia, Canada, New Zealand, and the United Kingdom.

The analysis begins with a focus on Belgium and Denmark, the canonical cases cited by Braunias, Boix, and Rokkan as examples of proportional representation as a response to coordination problems among the anti-socialists. I then expand the discussion to additional countries. This is a departure from what has become the standard empirical approach in this literature: cross-country regressions using a handful of countries (e.g. Boix, Cusack et al., Blais et al., Andrews and Jackman), where slight changes in measurement or specification lead to radically different results. Moreover, the theoretical framework introduced above allows for fairly subtle predictions about how party positions and internal party debates about electoral reform should change over time as the political geography of party support shifts. These claims are best examined with focused case studies that avoid binary characterizations of party platforms about electoral rules.

2.5.1 Belgium

It is easy to see why the adoption of proportional representation in Belgium might appear to be a case of anti-socialist coordination. It emerged as part of a pact between Liberals and Catholics in 1899, and during debates, socialists disrupted the legislature and ultimately voted against the reform bill. It was viewed by Social Democrats throughout Europe as a travesty, and an act of betrayal by the Liberals who supported it.

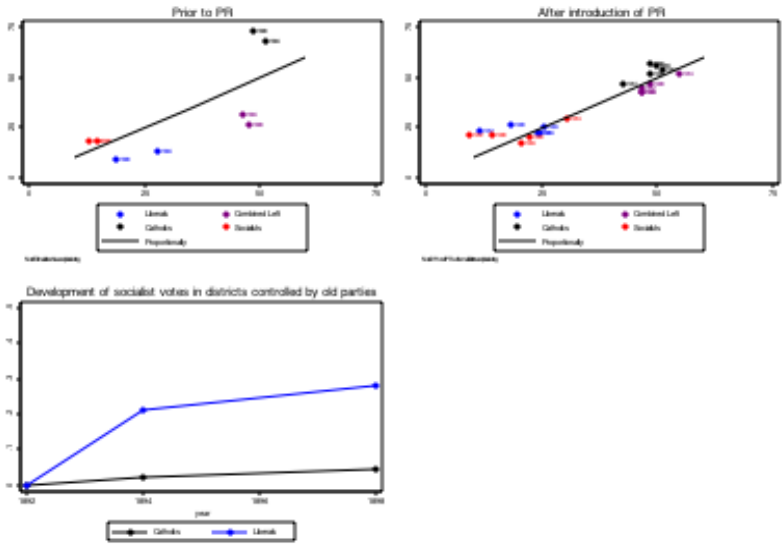
At the same time, a different set of facts would appear to support the Alesina and Glaeser perspective. Legislative reform was on the agenda in the first place because of massive street protests by workers, and after the promulgation of a reform bill featuring proportional representation, the protests temporarily subsided.

A closer look at the facts reveals a different dynamic. The official position of the Worker's Party was originally firmly in favor of proportional representation. While some of the most radical socialists, often incumbents in urban districts, argued that the party could get a sufficiently dispersed geographic distribution as to win majorities without proportional representation in the future, the moderate party leaders pushed for proportional representation, realizing that the party faced challenges in expanding its support base beyond the industrial core, and was hampered by the difficulty of convincing voters to abandon the Liberals in moderate districts. It appears that the socialist leaders criticized the bill not because it contained proportional representation, but because it failed to abolish plural voting. The Liberals had historically been leaders in the push for an expanded franchise in order to include the urban middle class in order to successfully challenge the Catholics, and the more radical Liberals worked hand-in-hand with socialists to push for equal voting rights. But as clarified above, equal voting rights created a dilemma for the Liberals. After strikes and unrest in 1893, after steadfastly rejecting universal male franchise, the Catholics were forced to relent and extend the franchise to all adult males, but this was essentially a sham, since they insisted on the adoption of plural voting, whereby educated and property-owning voters received up to three votes. It was enough to end the urban unrest, and it achieved the objectives of the Catholics very well. With plural voting, they had enough votes to continue defeating the left in large cities like Brussels, and they had solid majorities in their rural core constituencies.

At the same time, the Liberals were being squeezed by the Worker's Party in their former strongholds in the rapidly industrializing manufacturing core. The bottom panel in Figure 2.6 clarifies the asymmetric impact of socialist mobilization on the old parties. Starting with the election before the entry of the Workers' Party into the legislature, it plots the average vote share of the Workers' Party in the districts won by the Catholics and Liberals in 1892. It shows that the entry of the Workers' Party posed a serious threat to the Liberals but not the majority of rural Catholic incumbents. Yet in a non-trivial number of urban districts, the Catholics also had something to fear. (NEXT DRAFT, INCLUDE DISCUSSION OF BLOCK VOTING AND ITS DANGERS

FOR URBAN CATHOLICS, AS WELL AS A GRAPH OF SOCIALIST SUPPORT IN CATHOLIC URBAN DISTRICTS)

Figure 2.6: The impact of the entry of the Workers' Party in Belgium



One observer commented that "nothing remained for the Liberals except to choose the sauce with which they should be eaten" (Mahaim 1900). In accordance with the logic above, they chose the red sauce, and cooperated with socialists in order to avoid coordination failures in some urban districts. One might think that the two-round election system would obviate the need for coordination, but Belgium had multi-member districts (for example, Brussels had 18 seats), in which voters cast as many votes in the first round as there were seats, with the option of cumulating their votes on individual candidates. Failure by leftists to coordinate in the first round could lead to mistakes that allowed too few leftists to proceed to the second round. To solve this problem, the socialists and liberals issued joint slates of candidates in the districts with the largest coordination problems, strategically withdrew from others, and in districts with smaller magnitude and lower risks of coordination failure, they ran individual candidates.

The introduction of an expanded franchise with plural voting corresponds to the case described above, where a limited expansion of the franchise in Liberal strongholds forces them to either collaborate with socialists or be pushed out of the legislature almost completely. The Belgian Liberals pursued collaboration, and the cartels

were successful, but independent Liberals were pushed to the brink of extinction.

The first panel in Figure 2.6 displays a scatter plot of vote shares (on the horizontal axis) and seat share (on the vertical axis) for the Catholics (black), independent Liberals (blue), the Worker's Party (red), and because of the cartels, the combined left (in purple), for the years after the introduction of plural voting but immediately before the introduction of proportional representation. The 45 degree line is in black. The elections were quite disproportionate, and favored the Catholics. In this way, after the introduction of universal suffrage, the Catholics were able to solidify their majority.

Only a few years later, socialists and radical Liberals were again agitating for a fairer voting system. Socialists were blowing horns and throwing projectiles in parliament, and street protests were turning violent. Once again, Catholics were forced by extra-parliamentary agitation to consider electoral reform, though the preference a majority of the party was to retain the existing system that had been so good to them. Once again, the challenge for leaders of the Catholic party was to craft a tepid reform that would receive the votes of recalcitrant Catholic representatives in both chambers of the legislature while ending the social unrest.

For a large block of Catholic representatives, proportional representation and/or the abolition of plural voting were unacceptable. The Catholics were divided in half precisely as the theoretical discussion above would indicate. The rural Catholics had nothing to fear from the Workers' Party, and rural incumbents had no interest in letting go of their over-represented safe seats. The urban Catholics, however, were quite in danger of being squeezed out by the combined left. In fact, the first reform proposal of the Catholics attempted to please both constituencies within the party by introducing proportional representation only in hand-picked cities where Catholics fell below the majority threshold, leaving the existing system in place where Catholics retained majorities. This plan was shouted down in parliament. Finally, the moderate Catholic leadership came up with a plan that was rejected by a large block of rural Catholics, but was designed to pick up the votes of the remaining rump of independent Liberals. They offered to retain the existing small districts and the existing system of plural voting, but switch to a scheme of proportional representation using the d'Hondt system of seat allocation. In essence, they offered to rescue the Liberals in exchange for the retention of plural voting. The Worker's Party sternly objected, but the moment passed, and the left retreated.

Karl Liebknecht's described the deal as follows:

> The end sought was universal, equal and direct suffrage. But the clerical party knows its boys, knows its Pappenheimers. It knows that the bourgeoisie has no class interest in giving the laborers, who, in modern industrial states, constitute a majority of the population, the universal suffrage and thereby the prospect of winning a majority and getting political supremacy. It made a counter demand for proportional representation with plural voting, that is, giving more votes to the rich, and

> thereby granting to the radical bourgeoisie a share in the government, if it would assist in defeating universal and direct suffrage. And behold, without a minute's hesitation the gentlemen of the radical bourgeoisie broke their agreement with the socialists and joined the clericals in their fight against universal suffrage and the social democracy. Whoever is not convinced by this example that the emancipation struggle of the proletariat is a class struggle is one on whom further arguments would be wasted.

Once again, the Catholics had crafted a reform that helped keep them in power, aided by plural voting and a disproportionate translation of votes to seats. The Liberals came back to life, but this was not necessarily bad for the Catholics. By keeping the districts small and using d'Hondt, the Catholics preserved some of their advantages, while continuing to benefit from the relatively inefficient geographic distribution of support on the left. After an initial attempt to go it alone, the Liberals and Worker's Party again realized that they needed to cooperate, this time in small rural districts, where the d'Hondt system would threaten to keep them below the threshold for obtaining seats.

The second panel in Figure 2.6 shows a scatter plot of votes and seats in the period after the adoption of proportional representation, and before the next electoral reform. The Catholics continued to benefit, though less dramatically, from a favorable transformation of votes to seats, and most importantly, they continued to build comfortable parliamentary majorities.

In sum, the political geography perspective helps tie up some of the loose ends in the traditional literature. There was no national pact between Liberals and Conservatives to stop the uniform march of the Socialists to a national majority, though Liebknecht's quote could be misinterpreted to create that impression. Nor was there a coordination problem among the Catholics and Liberals (Boix 1999). Neither was proportional representation a victory gained on the streets by the revolutionary left. Rather, it was a successful effort by a part of the right-most party to temporarily avoid full and equal franchise with a carefully crafted reform. A majority was achieved by placating nervous urban Catholics, and by throwing a bone to a small but decisive group of urban Liberals who had been squeezed and splintered as a result of a coordination problem on the left.

2.5.2 Denmark

At first glance, Denmark would also seem to be an example of the traditional story in action. The adoption of proportional representation emerged from a multi-party deal that culminated in a constitutional amendment in 1915 that also expanded the franchise. On closer inspection, however, universal male franchise had already been achieved long before; the deal expanded the franchise to women and lowered the voting age, but this had no obvious anticipated partisan impact. Moreover, it is doubtful that the deal was conceived as an anti-socialist strategy, since the socialists were active players in the negotiations, and as in the Belgian case, were responsible

for initiating the process of electoral reform. In fact, the reforms were the culmination of over 10 years of efforts by Socialists and Radicals to overcome the electoral bias associated with a bad support distribution, in the face of opposition and foot-dragging by the center-right Venstre, which benefited from the old plurality system (Elklit 2002). The Danish left (Radicals and Socialists) were satisfied with the deal, approved of it, and ultimately benefited from it.

While the socialists were satisfied with the introduction of proportional representation, they would have also agreed to the retention of single-member districts with fair redistricting. They would not have agreed to any reform that did not deliver fairer representation, but an important bone of contention was reform of the undemocratic, Conservative-dominated upper chamber. Curiously, though, it was the Conservatives who were most adamantly in favor of proportional representation in the lower chamber. In short, the adoption of proportional representation was, in this case, a deal between the left, the center-left, and the right, achieved over the objections of a previously-dominant center-right party.

It is only with the political geography perspective laid out above that these strange bedfellows begin to make sense. As in Belgium, the geography of partisan support in the era of industrialization favored one of the old parties, and squeezed the others into suffering from coordination dilemmas and routine electoral bias. In the struggle against the Swedish monarchy, the Venstre ("left") developed a broad distribution of support, and like the Belgian Catholics, was strong in rural as well as some urban areas. In fact, the party was founded by liberal farmers in the 1870s.

The Venstre experienced a pair of splits. During the conflict with the Monarchy, a right-wing group split off and contested some districts around the turn of the century. Pulled to the right in some districts by this splinter party, another split occurred on the left, and the Radicals found districts where there was enough space for entry between the Social Democrats on the left and the Venstre on the center-right—the same tenuous place occupied by the Liberals in Belgium.

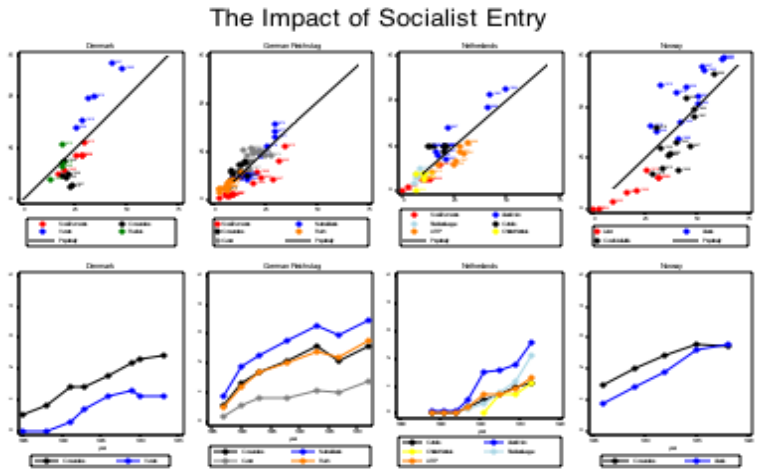
The Social Democrats first gained parliamentary representation in 1884. Just like the Worker's Party in Belgium, the Social Democrats found it necessary to coordinate with the "old' leftist party from the very beginning in order to avoid splitting votes and handing urban districts to the minority Conservatives. There was only one round to Danish elections, which were decided by simple plurality. Thus the danger of coordination failures was high. Already in 1895 and 1898, respectively, the Social Democrats only ran candidates in 21 and 23 electoral districts (out of 113 total), and Venstre candidates did not run in these districts. They continued this coordination until 1906, when the Radicals split from the Venstre, and thereafter, the Social Democrats coordinated their strategic withdrawals with the Radicals. By 1910, the Radicals and Social Democrats never contested the same

districts. Even then, when the Social Democrats were receiving around 25 percent of the votes, they only ran candidates in around half of the districts (see the histogram above). When discussions about electoral reform began at this time, surely no one believed the Social Democrats were on the verge of the "crushing victory" (Boix, p. 611) anticipated in the traditional perspective.

The Social Democrats and Radicals had a joint interest in electoral reform. The electoral districts were frozen during a period of dramatic urbanization and industrialization, leading to malapportionment on a large scale. This favored the Venstre, with its traditional rural support base, to the detriment of the leftist parties.

The Venstre received very high vote shares in sparsely populated rural areas, especially after the split with the Radicals, and received less support in urban areas. The Social Democrats received the lion's share of their support in urban, industrialized districts that were highly under-represented. The Radicals had only a slightly larger support base among rural than urban voters. The Conservatives had been the traditional party of the urban elite. As explained above, in an industrializing, urbanizing society with full franchise, a party of the right with a traditional support base in cities faces the prospect of becoming a permanent minority that can obtain votes but not seats. Not only did the Conservatives suffer, along with the Socialists, from malapportionment, but more importantly, they had been relegated to the status of a permanent minority in many of their former strongholds.

Figure 2.7: The impact of Socialist entry in Europe



Thus the political geography created a diverse, cross-class support base for electoral reform. The incentives are clarified in the leftmost panels of Figure 2.7. As the largest party, the Venstre (in blue) enjoyed a generous transformation of votes to seats. It also had an excellent geographic support distribution, and benefited from the coordination problems and under-representation of the left. The Social Democrats' seat share (in red) and that of the Radicals (in green) fell consistently below their vote shares, though the severity is masked by their strategic coordination.

Finally, it is clear that the Conservatives had the most to gain from proportional representation. Their seat share fell far below their vote share in almost every election. The most contentious issue in the constitutional reform negotiations surrounded the Conservatives' attempts to preserve their influence in the upper chamber. Their demands for proportional representation were not especially controversial for the Social Democrats and Radicals, who, while insisting on a reduction in electoral bias, did not have strong preferences between reapportionment and proportional representation (Carstairs 1980: 78, Elklit 2002). Consistent with the framework laid out above, while urbanization and industrialization were disastrous for the geographic distribution of Conservative support, the Venstre, especially after shedding the Radicals, had a rural support base that left them relatively unscathed by the growth of the urban working class. This is demonstrated in the lower panel of Figure 2.9, which displays the evolution of Socialist support in the districts formerly won by the Conservatives and Venstre (such a graph is not useful for the Radicals because of coordination with the Socialists). It shows that socialist incursions were far more threatening to the Conservatives than the Liberals. As a result, the Liberals worked hard to undermine electoral reform, but were overwhelmed by a cross-class coalition of Socialists, Radicals, and Conservatives, for whom geography generated a common interest in reform.

2.5.3 Beyond the canonical cases: Electoral reform in Continental Europe

Special attention was given to Belgium and Denmark since they are the cases cited most fondly in the traditional literature. Complete district-level data are also available for the years leading up to electoral reform in Germany, the Netherlands, and Norway, and in these countries as well, the geography of partisan support during the era of mobilization of workers explains parties' evolving positions on electoral reform. The top panel of Figure 2.7 displays scatter plots of vote shares and seat shares in the elections leading up to electoral reform, and the lower panel displays the evolution in socialist support in the districts traditionally won by the "old" parties. In each case, this analysis is possible because of the absence of redistricting. Figure 2.8 displays vote shares and seat shares for three additional countries for which district-level data are unavailable.

The most obvious commonality in Figures 2.7 and 2.8 is that in virtually all of the countries of Europe

during this period, Workers' and Social Democratic parties suffered from malapportionment due to large flows of workers to cities without redistricting, and suffered in the translation of votes to seats. In the scatterplots, the red dots are generally below the 45 degree line. In some cases electoral bias was compounded by excessive concentration of Socialist support in non-competitive industrial areas. In an era of limited franchise, plural voting, and undemocratic upper chambers, severe malapportionment only added insult to injury. Especially in the early years, when Socialists were attempting to convince trade union leaders and workers to abandon the Liberals, Social Democratic leaders were consistent champions of proportional representation.

However, in several countries, including Germany, Sweden, Belgium, and Denmark, some socialist leaders bucked against this perspective, and inter-party debates were lively. On the eve of electoral reform, some socialists began to believe that with full franchise and newly drawn electoral districts, the retention of single-member districts would be preferable to proportional representation because a tipping point had been reached, and the Socialists had the upper hand in the coordination dilemma vis--vis Liberals in the leftist and moderate districts. They argued that they were on the verge of squeezing the Liberals out of existence in the industrial districts and consolidating a domination of the left, and proportional representation would mistakenly provide a lifeline to the Liberals. Consistent with their own self-interest, however, these voices were most commonly heard from incumbents in urban districts (see Verney 1957 on Sweden, Mahaim 1900 on Belgium, XX on Germany). Returning to the histograms above, one can appreciate how especially the German and Swedish Social Democrats may have liked their chances under SMD, given the relatively diversified support base they had achieved.

Malapportionment was perhaps most pronounced in Germany, and this was the most important impetus for Liebknecht and others who advocated proportional representation. Figure X shows that aided by the early adoption of universal male suffrage for Reichstag elections, the SPD was able to slowly but surely make gains in a variety of rapidly growing urban and semi-urban districts, cutting into the vote shares of all of the bourgeois parties except for the Catholic party. Though by 1917 it was perhaps at the point where it could have indeed won a majoritarian election without malapportionment, the party stuck with its long-standing platform and proposed a proportional system for the Weimar Republic.

The Netherlands provides another example of Liberals being squeezed as industrialization and franchise expansion move forward in their traditional urban strongholds. As in Belgium, the Liberals used broad negotiations over a range of constitutional reforms to hold out for proportional representation, aided by Socialists wishing to overcome their own geography problem. The bottom panel of Figure 2.9 shows that as in Belgium, it was primarily the Liberals who were being threatened by socialist entry. As in Belgium, this tore the party

apart, and as demonstrated in the top panel of Figure 2.9, the socialist entry caused a rapid fall from dominance, and as in Belgium, the Liberals feared that any further franchise expansion would push them out completely. As a result, they used their leverage in the "great pacification" of 1917 to extract proportional representation (Andeweg 2005, Carstairs 1980).

Figure 2.7 suggests that Norway may be a case in which both the Liberals and Conservatives were squeezed by the entry of a workers' party with a diversified support base. In this sense, it comes closest to exemplifying the model of Boix (1999). As in Denmark, the core Conservative districts were in cities, and they were slipping away to the Labor Party with industrialization and urbanization. The strength of the Liberals was primarily in the rural periphery, which gave them a favorable transformation of votes to seats, above all because of the "peasant clause" insuring dramatic over-representation of rural areas. Yet unlike other countries, Labor was able to make incursions into a fair number of rural forestry districts in Norway (cites), creating a relatively broad geographic support distribution by World War I (recall the histograms above).

But the top panel of Figure 2.7 shows that as elsewhere, the Labor party suffered dramatically in the translation of votes to seats, which led its leaders to favor proportional representation. It also demonstrates that the (urban) Conservatives had also long suffered from electoral bias, which explains why they had already been advocating for proportional representation for years (Aardal 2005). The top panel of Figure 2.9 shows that malapportionment had always been kind to the Liberals, but the bottom panel shows why they eventually dropped their opposition to proportional representation, as they began to join the Conservatives in feeling squeezed by Labor incursions into their traditional districts. As in Denmark, the agreement had the flavor of a cross-class compromise. In this case, it rescued the Conservatives in the districts where they were being pushed into permanent minorities by providing them with proportional representation, reduced the malapportionment that had plagued Labor, while preserving enough rural over-representation to secure the agreement of the Liberals.

Party affiliations are not available for the district-level election results in Sweden prior to the adoption of proportional representation. The Swedish case involved complex parliamentary maneuvers that cannot be fully explained here. Electoral rules were bundled together with issues that were more important to all of the actors involved, including franchise expansion and the future of the upper chamber (Verney 1957). The Liberals and Socialists had the coordination problem described above in some districts, and both had suffered from electoral bias in the elections in the years before constitutional reforms (see Calvo 2009), while the Conservatives benefited. Leaders of both the Liberals and Social Democrats had advocated consistently for proportional representation for some time (Verney 1957). Eventually, however, individuals in both parties came to believe they were on the verge of being able to win elections under existing electoral rules. Some socialists came to believe

that if they could attain "universal suffrage, pure and simple," they could win majorities with single-member districts. Indeed, the histogram above suggests that by 1911, they had achieved a widespread presence throughout the country. In any case, it seems likely that under the existing single-member districts, with full franchise, the Social Democrats could have pushed the Conservatives out in many of their core support areas. This is intimated in Figure 2.8 by the fact that as the electorate gradually expanded, with each successive election, the vote share and seat share of the Conservatives declined. Initially indifferent, the Conservatives eventually came to embrace proportional representation, as did urban-based conservative parties in Denmark and Norway.

In the election immediately preceding the reform negotiations, the Liberals obtained an improved seat share at the expense of the Conservatives, and consistent with the logic above, some Liberals came to believe they could also win a legislative majority under single-member districts, but only if they could maintain plural voting. Their hope was to take over the dominant position of the Conservatives on the right. Reminiscent of the Danish case, the Conservatives could see that franchise expansion would hand some of their core urban districts to a combination of Liberals and Socialists. And as in Denmark and Norway, it was the Conservatives who used a moment of upheaval and institutional reform to lead a push for proportional representation.

Figure 2.8: votes and Seats in Italy, Sweden, and Switzerland

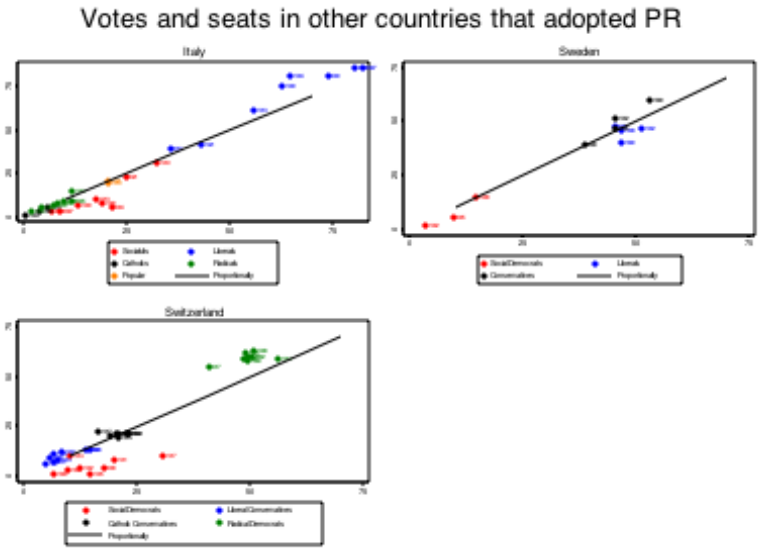


Figure 2.8 also includes vote shares and seat shares for two other European countries that adopted propor-

tional representation but where, like Sweden, district-level data are unavailable, and the only possibility is to supplement national-level data with descriptions in the secondary literature. Italy appears to be another case like the Netherlands, where a once-dominant urban Liberal party fears that it is gradually being supplanted by Socialists in its core districts. Note the secular decline in Liberal votes and seats in Figure 2.8 and the corresponding increase for the Socialists in the early part of the 20th century. According to Carstairs (1980), the impetus for the shift to proportional representation in Italy came from the Liberals. In Switzerland, Figure 2.10 reveals that the Radicals clearly benefited from the existing majoritarian system, and indeed, they fought vociferously against the Social Democrats, who pushed for proportional representation as a way of reducing electoral bias. Only through use of a referendum were the Social Democrats able to overcome the entrenched opposition of the Radicals to electoral reform. The secondary literature also points to Austria, in addition to Germany and Switzerland, as a case in which urban Social Democrats led the push for proportional representation because of the unfavorable transformation of votes to seats caused by malapportionment and an excessive concentration of support in too few districts.

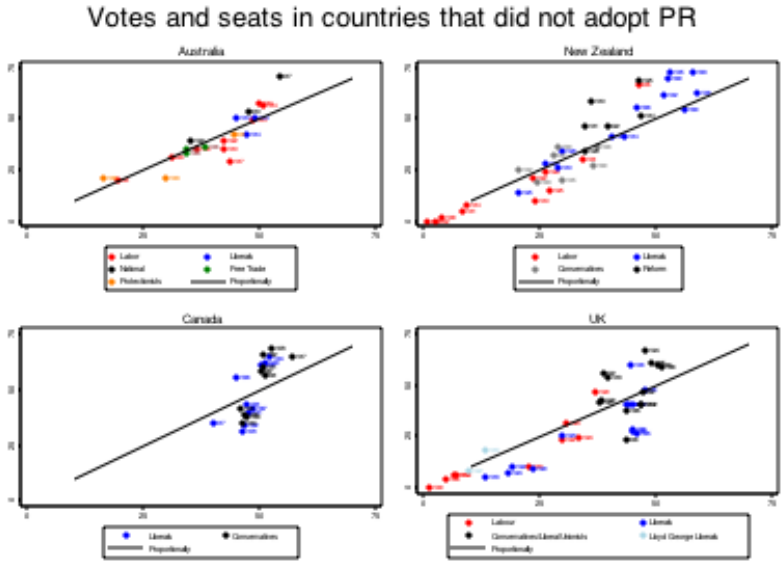
2.5.4 The retention of single-member districts

In short, while the specific causal mechanism about anti-socialist coordination does not hold up, the basic conjecture of the traditional argument stands up quite well: proportional representation in continental Europe was indeed in many cases a response of traditional parties to the electoral threat posed by socialists, and by understanding the geography of each party's preexisting support, it is possible to understand not only which of the "old" parties developed an affection for proportional representation and when they developed it, but even which specific incumbents became the standard bearers for proportional representation within parties.

Moreover, it is possible to understand why Socialists, with their concentrated urban support base, electoral under-representation, and the frustration of negotiating complex deals with Liberals, would find proportional representation attractive as well, especially in the early years. Yet it is also easy to see why the most confident among them—especially those that had built their careers by ensconcing themselves in safe urban districts—saw the retention of winner-take-all districts as a way to finally kill off the Liberals and take complete ownership of the political left. This logic was most appealing in the countries where the socialists had made the greatest gains, or believed they were poised to do so with full franchise, but were nevertheless hampered by the need to coordinate with centrist parties. As pointed out by Penads (2008), the countries with the most optimistic socialists were also those with the strongest labor unions. The downside of proportional representation—a lifeline to declining Liberals or Radicals—was less worrisome for workers' parties in countries like Germany,

Switzerland, and Austria, where the Social Democrats had already come to dominate the left side of the political spectrum under winner-take-all districts over a lengthy period with full male franchise.

Figure 2.9: Votes and seats in Anglophone countries



This perspective also sheds light on the preferences of parties in countries that did not adopt proportional representation. First of all, Australia, Canada, and the United States differed from European countries in that they did not experience the dramatic introduction of a workers' party in a system where "bourgeois" parties were entrenched. In Australia, the Labour party, already organized in some of the colonies before confederation, quickly came to dominate the left side of the spectrum, and never had to fight a battle for entry against Liberals in the urban districts (See the histograms above). And unlike the Social Democrats that dominated the left side of the spectrum in the German-speaking countries, Figure 2.9 reveals that they did not suffer from substantial electoral bias. The initial non-Socialist parties—the Free Traders and Protectionists—were more like collections of local notables than coherent political parties, and largely in response to the organization of Labor, they rather quickly changed affiliations and developed into a coherent conservative party (first called the Liberals, and later, National).

In the United States and Canada, efforts at socialist mobilization were largely unsuccessful in legislative elections, and while early 20th century socialists, and more recently, the CCF and NDP in Canada, have always

favored proportional representation for the same reason it was favored by socialists in early 20th century Europe when they tried to break in against the Liberals, the main parties have never had incentives to propose this. To the extent that trade unions and mobilized urban workers grew into politically important actors in the early 20th century, the Canadian Liberals, and eventually the Democrats in the United States, were able to nudge their platforms to the left in order to stave off Socialist entry, at least temporarily.

Unlike 19th century Liberals in the UK and New Zealand, the Canadian Liberals have survived the belated rise of a workers' party in the second half of the 20th century without shifting to proportional representation. In contrast to the electoral upheaval of franchise expansion and industrialization in turn-of-the-century Belgium, Netherlands, or Italy, the Canadian Liberals did not fear for their existence when the CCF and NDP started capturing districts. Rather, they made the (correct) bet that they were better off losing a handful of far-left districts than allowing their upstart leftist challenger to enjoy the fruits of proportional representation.

When workers' parties started contesting urban districts in New Zealand and the United Kingdom in the early part of the 20th century, the Liberals initially made the same bet, but with a very different long-term outcome. They hoped to maintain their position of dominance on the left, and while early Socialists and Labor leaders pushed for proportional representation as in Europe, the Liberals maintained the hope of marginalizing them, vacillating between a strategy of coordinating withdrawals in a few districts, and one of imploring leftist voters that a vote for a workers' party was a best a wasted vote, and at worst would run the risk of handing an urban or mining district to the minority Conservatives.

With the benefit of hindsight, it is clear that the British and New Zealand Liberals were in a position quite similar to the Liberals in Belgium and the Netherlands. (The next draft will include district-level analysis of socialist entry similar to that presented above). As trade unions and their workers defected to Labour parties in urban districts, Liberals were increasingly placed in the same impossible position as the Belgian Liberals. Proportional representation was their best hope, especially after the franchise expansion of 1918. Yet as Bogdanor (year) and Andrews and Jackman (2004) document, parliamentary voting records reveal that opinion among British Liberals was still divided as late as 1918, with a majority still hoping to reclaim their rightful place as the dominant urban party while coordinating with Labour in some districts, as in 1910. Only a few years later, Figure 9 reveals that the Liberals were well on their way to being supplanted by Labour as the party of the left, and they should have fought tooth and nail for proportional representation in 1918 while they had the chance. They quickly adopted proportional representation as a platform, but it was too late. In 19XX, they famously attempted to make their support for a Labour-led minority government contingent on the adoption of proportional representation. Yet Labour refused. Following the reasoning discussed above, Labour leaders set aside

their initial openness to proportional representation, and seeing their opportunity to squeeze out the Liberals, they rallied around the retention of SMD. Again, the strongest voices in favor of SMD were those of the safe urban incumbents [NEXT DRAFT WILL USE ROLL CALL VOTES TO SHOW THIS].

The New Zealand Liberals suffered a remarkably similar fate. Like their British counterparts, Figure 2.9 shows that the Liberals experienced a golden era of dominance, but it came to an end shortly after Labour began contesting urban districts. They were squeezed and splintered like other urban Liberal parties, and as early as 1914, they began advocating proportional representation, but as in Britain, they never had the opportunity to implement it (Milne 1966). Labour leaders made the same transition as in Britain, learning to embrace the single-member district system once they had the opportunity to finish off the Liberals.

2.6 Summary

Even with a good body of primary and secondary historical materials, it is difficult to ascertain the "true" preferences of party leaders during periods of intense negotiation when much is at stake, many cross-cutting issues are on the table, and actors have incentive to behave strategically. The underlying dynamics can be even harder to identify when parties experience internal divisions. Insofar as they can be reconstructed, the preferences of European party leaders, and in some cases even factions within parties, over electoral reform in early 20th century Europe can be explained very well by looking at the geographic distribution of past and expected future electoral support.

There is little evidence to suggest that the leaders of old "bourgeois" parties colluded to protect themselves from the rising tide of socialism by adopting proportional representation. At the district level, there is little evidence that the old parties were concerned about coordination failures among themselves that would allow socialist victories. Rather, the geography of industrialization and franchise expansion more often created a coordination problem on the left. Indeed, liberal parties throughout Europe formed alliances and cartels with socialists during this period, while a party of the right or center-right with firm support in non-industrial areas cruised to victory. In these cases, the Liberals or Radicals eventually came to understand that the new socialist parties would squeeze them out of existence. When they realized this in time and had sufficient leverage, as in Belgium and the Netherlands, they became crucial players in the adoption of proportional representation. When they did not, as in the UK and New Zealand, they were squeezed out.

In other cases, the old conservative party had relied on a support base among urban elites, and it faced the prospect of being overwhelmed by votes of the newly enfranchised for leftist parties, while another of the "old"

parties with a support base outside the industrial areas cruised to victory. In these countries, the right rallied for proportional representation, even while trying to cling to other undemocratic privileges.

Like most small parties, socialists often favored proportional representation during the initial stage of entry, and thereafter, substantial electoral bias generally only enhanced their incentives to favor PR. However, in the countries where the socialists were most successful in gaining a foothold, some socialist leaders began to favor reapportionment with the retention of winner-take-all districts, hoping to force urban voters to choose between liberals and socialists, eventually clearing a path for the socialists to enhance their influence by driving the liberals out of existence. Thus while a strong, successful socialist party without other urban leftist competitors helped bring about proportional representation in Germany, it was the very strength and success of workers' parties in countries with established Liberal parties, like Sweden, the UK, and New Zealand, that later turned some of their leaders against proportional representation, and in the latter cases, effectively prevented reform.

Thus it is difficult to draw a simple connection between the strength and mobilization of the left in the early part of the century and the adoption of proportional representation (Alesina and Glaeser). In fact, in several cases it was social unrest organized by socialists over universal suffrage that made electoral reform into an urgent priority, but it was one of the bourgeois parties that used these situations to extract proportional representation.

2.7 Looking ahead

This chapter has accomplished three key objectives that help lay the foundation for the rest of the book. First, it demonstrated that the economic geography of industrialization in the late 19th century created an industrial working class that was concentrated in a minority of electoral districts. In later chapters, we will see why this created a long-term challenge for the left, even after the industrial proletariat faded from political relevance and the dreams of radical socialists were no longer taken seriously.

Second, it introduces a specific problem that has continued to plague leftist parties to the present day in countries with single-member districts. By creating a long left tail in the distribution of political preferences across districts, the political geography of the industrial revolution creates internal conflict on the left over both policies and institutions. Urban incumbents in safe leftist districts in dense, heavily industrialized areas favor very different policies than do leftist candidates in the pivotal moderate districts, which as we will learn in later chapters, often leads to intense battles over the party platform and ultimately, splits between far-left and center-left parties. Some version of the Liberal-Labor conflict described in this chapter continues to the present

day, creating a dynamic where there is an "insurgent" part on the left favoring proportional representation, and an "established" party of the left that prefers the retention of single-member districts, even if the leftist agenda would be best served by proportional representation. Even within the established leftist party, this can put urban incumbents in safe seats at odds with the collective interest of the party when it comes to things like platform choice and redistricting.

Third, since later chapters will argue that the left is only afflicted by a political geography problem when small, plurality electoral districts are used, it was important to establish why some countries retained this system and others rejected it in the early 20th century. We have learned that the incursions of socialists in urban districts created incentives for electoral reform among the non-socialist parties, and in some cases among the socialist parties as well. Early 20th century democracies retained single-member districts in either of two rather different types of situations. First, there was little interest in electoral reform when socialist entry was sufficiently limited, as in the United States and Canada. Second, when socialist parties supplanted the preexisting leftist parties very quickly, the former had few incentives to change the electoral system, and the latter did not get an opportunity.

Chapter 3

Urban Form and the Geographic Distribution of Votes

3.1 Introduction: Updike's Pennsylvania

> These acres of dead railroad track and car shops and stockpiled wheels and empty boxcars stick in the heart of the city like a great rusting dagger. All this had been cast up in the last century by what now seem giants, in an explosion of iron and brick still preserved intact in this city where the sole new buildings are funeral parlors and government offices, Unemployment and Join the Army.
>
> John Updike, Rabbit is Rich, page 29.

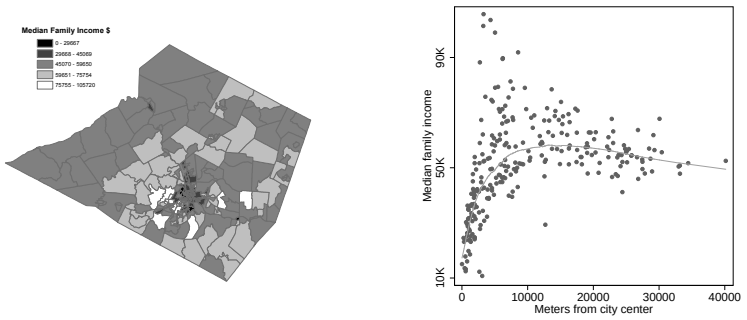
As readers follow the exploits of Harry Angstrom and his extended family in John Updike's "Rabbit" novels, they follow an evocative history of the rise, decline, and suburbanization of a medium-sized American manufacturing agglomeration. After becoming a railroad hub, Reading, Pennsylvania (called Brewer in the novels) industrialized rapidly after the Civil War with the construction of iron and steel foundries, textile mills, machine works, and facilities producing hardware, bricks, pianos, and furniture. In close proximity to the foundries and mills, a dense residential section of tightly packed attached brick homes and apartment buildings was built in the urban core to house the mostly German industrial working class, including Updike's protagonist as a young boy.

Labor unions successfully organized many of the workers in the 19th century, and perhaps in large part because of its relative ethnic homogeneity, the Socialist party was extremely successful in organizing the workers of the Reading working-class neighborhoods throughout the gilded age, and by the 1930s, the Socialists had

come to dominate local government, including the mayor's office.

Eventually, the industrial jobs attracted migrants from other countries and regions, including African American migrants from the South. As Updike describes, the "row houses built solid by German workingmen's savings and loan associations" were later inhabited by Poles and Italians, who were eventually "squeezed out by the blacks and Hispanics that in Harry's youth were held to the low blocks down by the river" (page). The foundries and mills, all in close proximity to the city center, eventually closed, and the urban core of Reading entered a long decline. The affordable and durable brick houses of the urban core were occupied no longer by white print-makers and foundry workers, but by a mix of low-income white, African American, and Latino workers in the service sector. The poor clustered in these neighborhoods not only because the houses themselves were affordable, but because the poor (initially including Harry himself) could not afford automobiles, and the old working-class neighborhoods were well-served by bus lines.

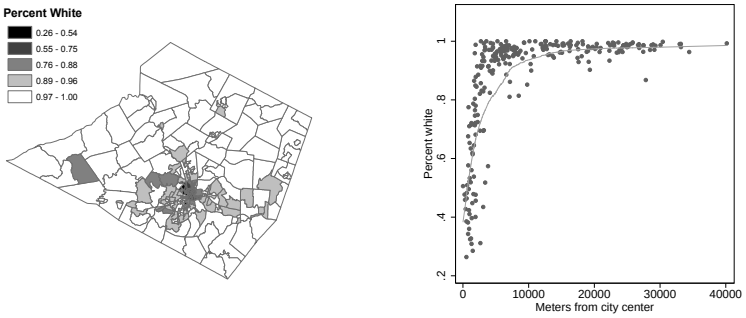
As for higher-income families, Updike's protagonist, who marries into a management position at a Toyota dealership, once again typifies the evolution of American urban form. Public transportation and then the rise of the automobile encouraged the move to a suburban environment with larger single-family homes.



(a) 2000 Median Family Income (b) Income and distance from city center

Figure 3.1: Income in Reading, PA

This process produced a map of income and race in the American city that is still familiar today. Using data from the 2000 census at the level of census block groups, Figure 3.1 presents a map of median family income in the Reading metropolitan statistical area, with darker shades corresponding to lower income. Based on this map, the second panel plots income against distance from the Reading city center. It shows that the urban core is extremely poor, but as one moves from the center to the suburbs, median family income increases dramatically, and then falls slightly as one enters the rural periphery.

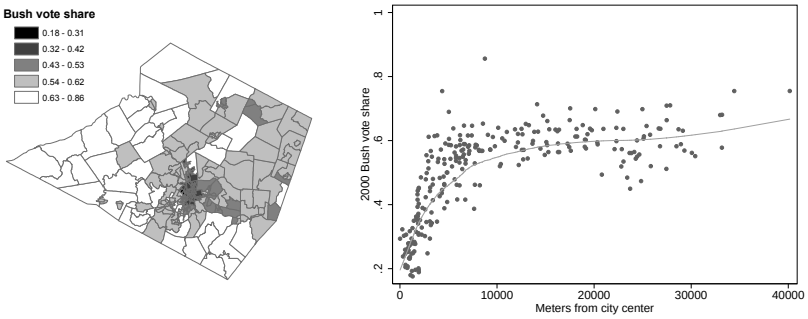


(a) Percent white (b) Race and distance from city center

Figure 3.2: Race in Reading, PA

Figure 3.2 provides a similar display using census data on race. Since the great migration, the dense urban housing in Northern industrial cities like Reading contains substantial concentrations of African Americans, while the suburbs and exurbs are primarily white. More recently, urban centers like Reading have continued to attract low-income immigrants from other countries.

The transformation of industrial agglomerations like Reading have had clear political implications. In the 1930s, the urban working-class Socialists became Democrats as they were folded into a New Deal coalition that adopted many of their platforms. For the first time, the United States had a mainstream political party with platforms that began to resemble some of the European leftist parties discussed in the previous chapter, and one of its most important constituencies was the urban working class in places like Reading. At the same time, the relatively high-income suburbs became the core of the Republican party. The original New Deal Democrats of the urban core, like Harry's father, were eventually replaced with African Americans who voted overwhelmingly for Democrats, while the suburban periphery was inhabited by higher-income whites like Harry and his country-club friends who, while somewhat heterogeneous, tended to vote Republican.



(a) Bush vote share 2000 (b) Bush vote share and distance from city center

Figure 3.3: Electoral behavior in Reading, PA

This pattern can be visualized for Reading in Figure 3.3. Using geographic information system (GIS) software, I have used precinct-level results of the 2000 presidential election to generate estimates of partisanship at the level of census block groups. The map and accompanying graph in Figure 3.3 show that the densely populated, low-income neighborhoods of the urban core are staunchly Democratic. In most of the precincts of the urban core, Al Gore received well above 75 percent of the vote. As one travels to the suburbs, the Bush vote share quickly increases and then levels off at a little under 60 percent. Note that there are very few precincts, even in the rural periphery, that approach the partisan homogeneity of the urban core.

The goal of this chapter is to establish that this pattern was not unique to industrial Pennsylvania, or to the United States. The industrial revolution not only created the urban working class featured in the previous chapter, but it also produced something that lasted much longer: dense neighborhoods that continue to vote overwhelmingly for parties of the left, surrounded by sparser neighborhoods that vote for parties of the right, though less overwhelmingly so.

This chapter will establish that a relatively tight correlation between population density and left voting is quite ubiquitous in industrialized societies. The precise urban form varies considerably from one place to another, but a common feature is the persistence of a dense cluster of homogeneous electoral support for leftist political parties in the neighborhoods where housing was constructed for the industrial working class before World War II. In Pennsylvania and much of the rest of the Eastern United States, these neighborhoods are in or very close to the city center because industrialization and the growth of the city went hand in hand. The same is true of the British industrial cities like Manchester and Birmingham that developed in conjunction with industrialization.

In some cities, especially those of Europe and Latin America that were already large prior to industrialization, or cities where beaches, ocean views, or 19th century architecture and amenities are sufficiently appealing, quite in contrast to Updike's Reading, the central city retains a substantial high-income presence. In these cities, some of the most densely populated areas are on the outskirts of the city along with the manufacturing works (or their rusting and crumbling remnants). Of course it is possible to find large pockets of high-income conservatives in these fashionable city centers, but this chapter also documents an interesting trend whereby some high-income urban voters are surprisingly open to the parties of the left.

This chapter continues by first adding some structure and generality to the story of Reading, and relating it to a broad literature that spans economic history, urban sociology, and urban economics. While there are important variations within and across countries, the evolution of urban form in industrialized societies follows some relatively familiar patterns, and all of them involve the construction of dense working-class housing in proximity

to ports, docks, factories, natural resource points, or transportation hubs. In most cities, these neighborhoods remain relatively poor, and they are often populated by racial minorities and/or new migrants.

Next, I show that these densely populated neighborhoods vote very reliably for parties of the left, and there is an interesting spatial pattern whereby left voting is a function of residential distance from the city center. Finally, I demonstrate that this can be explained in part, but not completely, by the spatial distribution of income, immigrants, and minorities within cities.

3.2 Industrialization and the Evolution of Urban Form

> With the exception of this commercial district, all Manchester proper, all Salford and Hulme, a great part of Pendleton and Chorlton are all unmixed workingpeople's quarters, stretching like a girdle, averaging a mile and a half in bredth, around the commercial district. Outside, beyond this girdle, lives the upper and middle bourgeoisie, the middle bourgeoisie in regularly laid out streets in the vicinity of the working quarters, especially in Chorlton and the lower-lying portions of Cheetham Hill; the upper bourgeoisie in remoter villas and gardens in free, wholesome country air, in fine, comfortable homes, passes once every half or quarter hour by omnibuses going into the city.
>
> Friedrich Engels

3.2.1 On Working Class Housing

In some crucial aspects, Engels' description of early 19th century Manchester is surprisingly similar to Updike's Pennsylvania. While Americans often think of suburbanization as a process that began in the 1950s, during his time in England, Friedrich Engels was already describing a basic pattern that started early in the 19th century. Suburbanization and residential sorting by income are almost as old as industrialization itself. Prior to the industrial revolution and the development of horse-drawn omnibuses, the rich and poor lived cheek by jowl in towns and cities. But once it was possible to commute by omnibus rather than on foot, "the old patterns, such as living above the shop, or a vertical social gradient with the 'noble' and 'servile' floors in a single multi-story building, gradually (though not fully) gave way to the more homogeneous blocks of flats, row houses, or detached villas" (Hohenberg XX, 3041).

Rich literatures in urban sociology and urban economics have discovered that while of course there is tremendous diversity in the world's cities, Engels was partially correct in his assessment that "this hypocritical plan is more or less common to all great cities" (p. 50). He was referring to a pattern of spatial segregation whereby a commercial district thrives in the city center, surrounded by poor workers who live in squalor in a ring of working-class districts that are cut through by thoroughfares lined with shops, such that the wealthy

salaried professionals and managers living in the suburbs are brought into minimal contact with urban workers during their commute.

How does this pattern develop? When factories were initially built in places like Manchester, they were in close proximity to the city center. For many factories, it was important to be close to the river and warehouses, and all of the positive externalities associated with co-location described by Marshall (XX) and Krugman (XX) were present. Workers had no option but to live in very closer proximity to the factories. According to Hohenberg (XX), "the long hours of work and the poor, relatively expensive transport forced workers to reside near their places of work" (3040). According to Wohl (XX), living in close proximity to employment was absolutely imperative for "porters, market workers, men in the building trades, dock hands, tailors, jewelers (who often shared tools), and most of the casually employed" (p. 17). This imposed a tremendous demand for housing near factories, and workers had to endure high rents and live in tight, cramped quarters. Wohl (XX) cites evidence that in 1880s London, almost half of workers lived within one mile of their place of employment. For these families, suburbs were of little use. Wohl (XX) quotes a casually employed London worker in 1882: "I might as well go to America as go to the suburbs" (p 18).

Thus in the initial period of industrialization, cities were transformed by the development of modest working-class housing, often forming the "girdle" described by Engels around the central business district. This took a number of forms. In cities that had an ancient pre-industrial residential section, like Manchester, its former inhabitants "removed with their descendants into better-built districts, and left the houses, which were not good enough for them, to a working-class population..." (Engels XX, page X). These old districts were often characterized by "irregular cramming together of dwellings in ways which defy all rational plan, of the tangle in which they are crowded literally one upon the other Every scrap of space left by the old way of building has been filled up and patched over until not a foot of land is left to be further occupied" (Engels XX, page).

When there was open space in proximity to a factory, or where the old buildings were removed, developers designed innovative ways to build as many dwellings as possible within walking distance to the factories. In Britain, the innovation was the development of identical rows of 6 to 10 back-to-back terrace houses that were erected around 10 feet apart. This came to represent 75 percent of the housing stock in Birmingham, Nottingham, Liverpool, and other parts of the northern and midland regions of Britain in the 1840s, as well as a significant share of the housing in South London (Roger XX). Elsewhere, like the Northeastern United States as well as Ontario and Quebec, the construction techniques involved brick and stone tenement houses and row houses, and in New England, the innovation was the affordable, narrow wooden triple-decker. Local variants of the narrow, attached row house developed in the larger cities of Australia and New Zealand as well.

Demand for housing in proximity to factories was strong during industrial booms, and much of the housing was built by profit-seeking developers and speculators. In some cases, especially when firms built new factories away from the city center, the firms invested in building their own dense housing developments in the shadow of the factories. In Germany, labor unions became actively involved in financing the construction of working-class housing developments (citation). Eventually, the demand for affordable working-class housing attracted government involvement, and immense low-income housing projects were constructed in proximity to industrial jobs. In some cities, once a public transportation network was in place, these housing projects were built on bus or train stops on the periphery of the city rather than directly in the shadows of factories.

When the area around the central business district became crowded with low-income workers, higher-income families sought out the fresh air and larger, newer houses of the suburbs. This was facilitated first by the horse-drawn tram, then by the streetcar and other forms of rail transportation and in some cases the motorized bus, and ultimately by the automobile. Initially, inter-urban transport was a means for the rich to escape the squalor of the rapidly growing industrial agglomerations.

3.2.2 On the durability of urban form

Some variation on this theme can be found in many of the world's industrialized cities. From mid-19th century slum clearance efforts in London to the recent destruction of public housing in Chicago, national and city governments make frequent attempts to remove the more squalid remnants of earlier housing construction and make the city more attractive for higher-income residents. Yet for the most part, the dense working-class housing constructed during the era of heavy industrialization has been extremely resilient, and it is still the heart and soul of the urban landscape in many industrialized areas. In fact, when such housing was destroyed during World War II in Europe, it was often rebuilt in a very similar form thereafter.

Glaeser and Gyourko (2005) explain why this is important. Buildings were rapidly constructed in the 19th and early 20th century to keep up with exploding demand, but when demand dries up, the buildings do not suddenly disappear. When a city's manufacturing base shrinks and economic activity dies down, as has been the case with the painful "deindustrialization" of Northern England and the Northeastern and Midwestern manufacturing belts in the United States, population loss is much slower than one might expect, in large part because of the durability of housing. Economic malaise in the presence of durable housing does not mean that everyone leaves a declining area. While those with the best labor market prospects might flee a declining inner city, a substantial low-skill population stays behind, precisely because the housing is so affordable.

Even as cities de-industrialize and the manufacturing-oriented urban proletariat described by Engels fades

away, the affordable working-class housing from an earlier era has continued to attract poor migrants from other cities, regions, or countries. Thus the spatial distribution of income within the metropolis described by Engels has not faded away.

It is no longer the case that workers must live in close proximity to the central city in order to walk to their factory jobs. Employment in the service sector is spread throughout the city and surrounding suburbs, and manufacturing jobs have, in many cities, moved to the suburban and exurban periphery. Yet the poor tend to be quite geographically clustered, often in the old working-class neighborhoods, and as described by Engels in Manchester, the wealthiest residents often live in suburbs.

The literature offers several explanations for this. First, there is the "flight from blight" argument that resembles Engels' claim: the poor had little choice but to live in the city center initially, and the wealthy chose to flee the social problems associated with the urban poor (Mieszkowski and Mills XX, Mills and Lubuele XX). Second, the classic explanation for this pattern in the urban economics literature comes from the Alonso-Muth-Mills model, in which the rich move to suburbs essentially because they have a preference for more land and larger houses. That is, the elasticity of demand for land with respect to income is greater than the elasticity of the value of commuting time with respect to income.

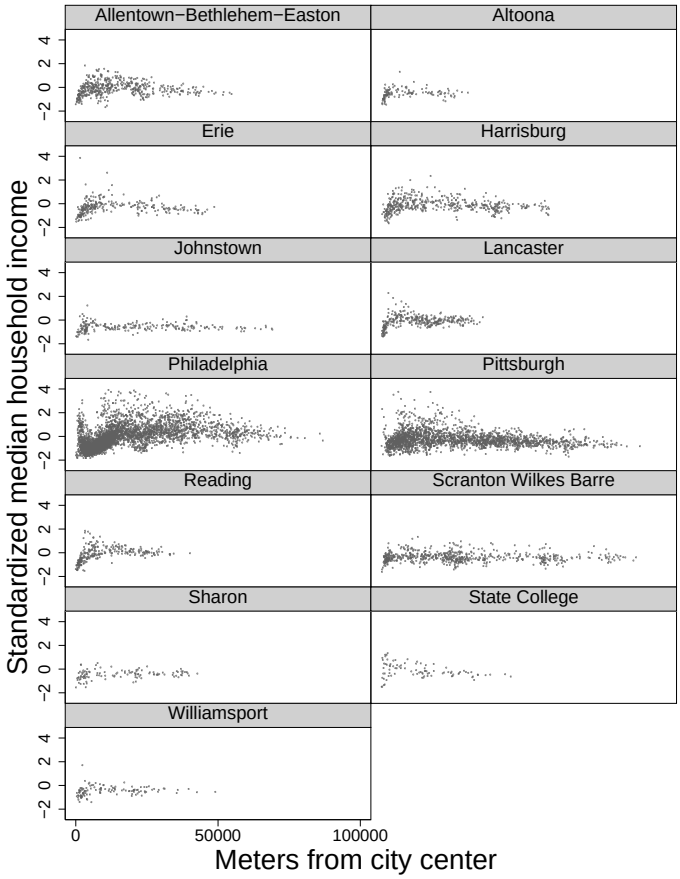
Third, as in the mid 19th century, transportation technology is probably still an important part of the story. LeRoy and Sonsteile (1983) and Glaeser, Kahn, and Rappaport (2008) argue that the clustering of the poor in cities, at least in the United States, has to do with the economics of automobile ownership versus public transportation. Quite simply, automobiles are too expensive for the poor, and they are better off in residential settings that are proximate to public transportation. In this story, even though the initial development of public transportation was built to facilitate the escape of the rich from the city center, in an era of widespread automobile ownership among the middle and upper class, public transportation networks that serve central cities may be an important part of the explanation for the urban clustering of the carless poor.

3.2.3 How widespread is this pattern?

How widespread is the urban form described by Engels and Updike? Census data can help to provide some answers.

The United States

Figure 3.4: Income in Pennsylvania cities



I use a study by the census department to locate the coordinates of the centroid of the central business district for every metropolitan statistical area (MSA) in the United States, and then calculate the distance between that point and the centroids of all other census block groups in the MSA. This allows for the representation of things like income, race, population density, and electoral behavior as functions of distance from the center of the city.

First, let us move beyond Reading to the rest of Pennsylvania. Figure 3.4 displays scatter plots of median household income against the distance from the city center for Pennsylvania's largest cities. Income is standardized so as to have a (national) mean of zero and standard deviation of one.

Figure 3.4 demonstrates that Reading is not unusual. Each of Pennsylvania's major population centers has a dense cluster of very poor census blocks around the central business district, and these are generally notably poorer than the low-income districts of the rural periphery. The wealthiest neighborhoods in Pennsylvania are

all in suburban areas within commuting distance to a central business district, especially those of Philadelphia and Pittsburgh. The plots generally have a pronounced bend at the point when one crosses from the suburban car-oriented areas to the central city.

Note that the string of industrial agglomerations of the Lehigh Valley—Allentown, Bethlehem, and Easton—are combined in one graph, with Allentown treated as the city center. The second and third low-income clusters in that graph are the central cities of Bethlehem and Easton. The same approach is taken in the Lackawanna River valley, where Scranton is treated as the city center (more on this region below).

One break from the monotony in Figure 3.4 is Philadelphia, where the plot reveals a number of very wealthy census blocks in the center of Philadelphia. Note that there is also a small handful of rather wealthy blocks directly in the center of Pittsburgh. Unlike other cities in Pennsylvania, the two largest cities have thriving high-income neighborhoods in the city center, where wealthy individuals are able to live in close proximity to employment centers and amenities of the city center. Otherwise, high-income neighborhoods are spread throughout the suburban periphery.

Next, Figure 3.5 examines the spatial distribution of racial groups in Pennsylvania by examining the relationship between the distance from the city center and the percent of the population in the block group that is identified in the census as white. Not surprisingly, it shows that non-whites are highly concentrated in the neighborhoods of the urban core. This is true not only of Pennsylvania and Pittsburgh (and some of their relatively dense satellite cities), but also of Pennsylvania's relatively small 19th century industrial agglomerations like Erie and Allentown, where African Americans settled to take manufacturing jobs during the great migration.

Next, Figures 3.6 and 3.7 take a closer look at the geography of housing around cities. First, Figure 3.6 displays the median year of home construction in each census block group. Unfortunately the census lumps together all homes constructed before 1940, but the graph does provide a nice picture of the suburbanization process. The residential housing in the urban core consists primarily of housing built for workers before World War II, and the gentle increase as one moves away from the city center captures the concentric rings of home construction emanating further and further into the suburban and exurban periphery over time.

Figure 3.7 displays the percent of the population that owns their own homes, showing that home ownership is very common in suburban, exurban, and rural areas, but the 19th century urban core is dominated by renters.

Figure 3.5: Race in Pennsylvania cities

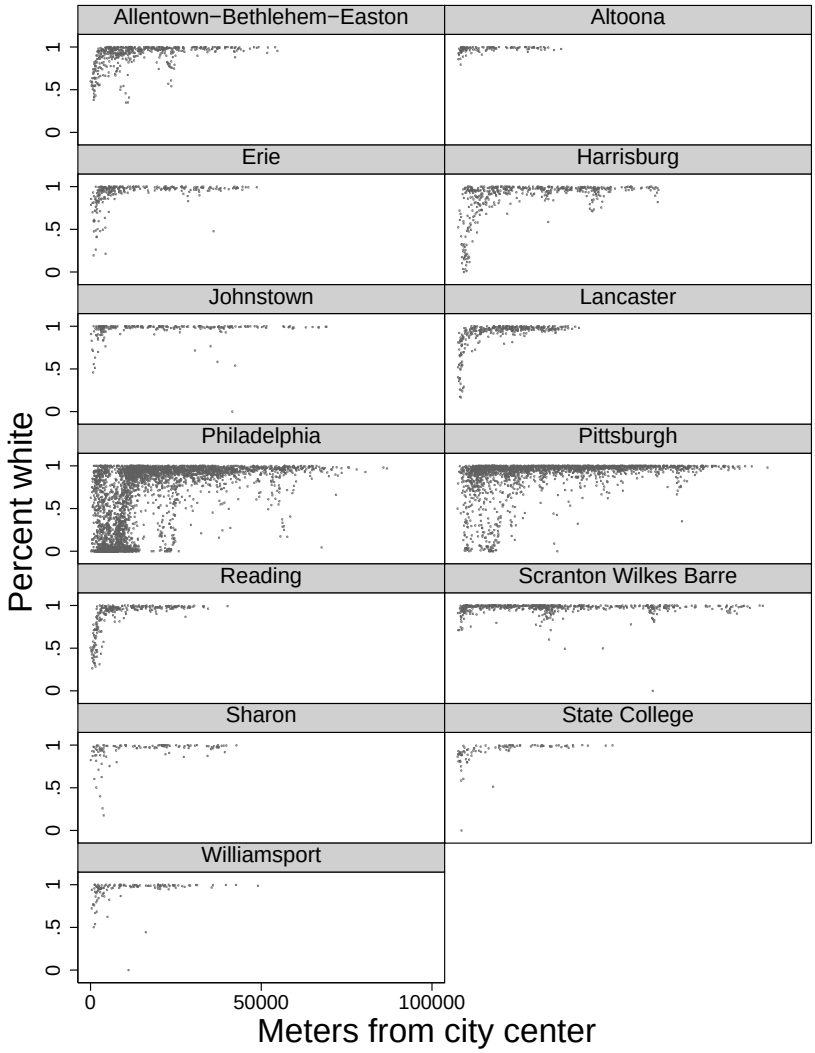


Figure 3.6: Year of home construction in Pennsylvania cities

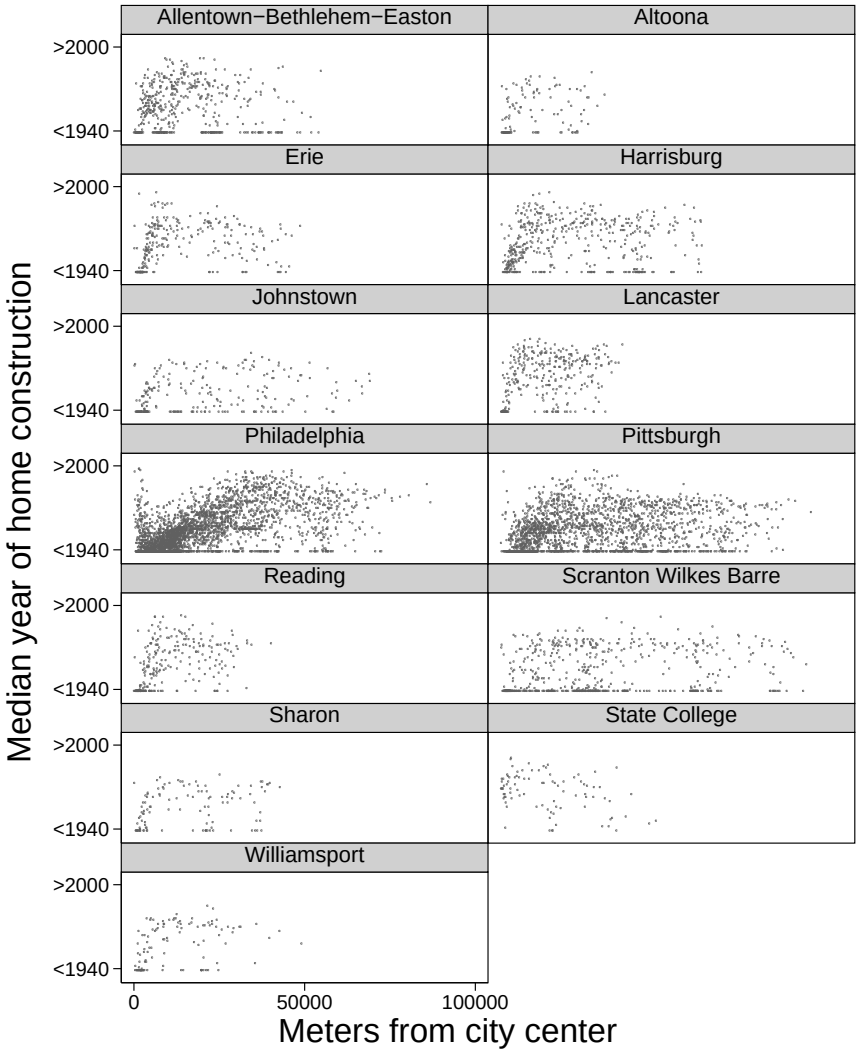
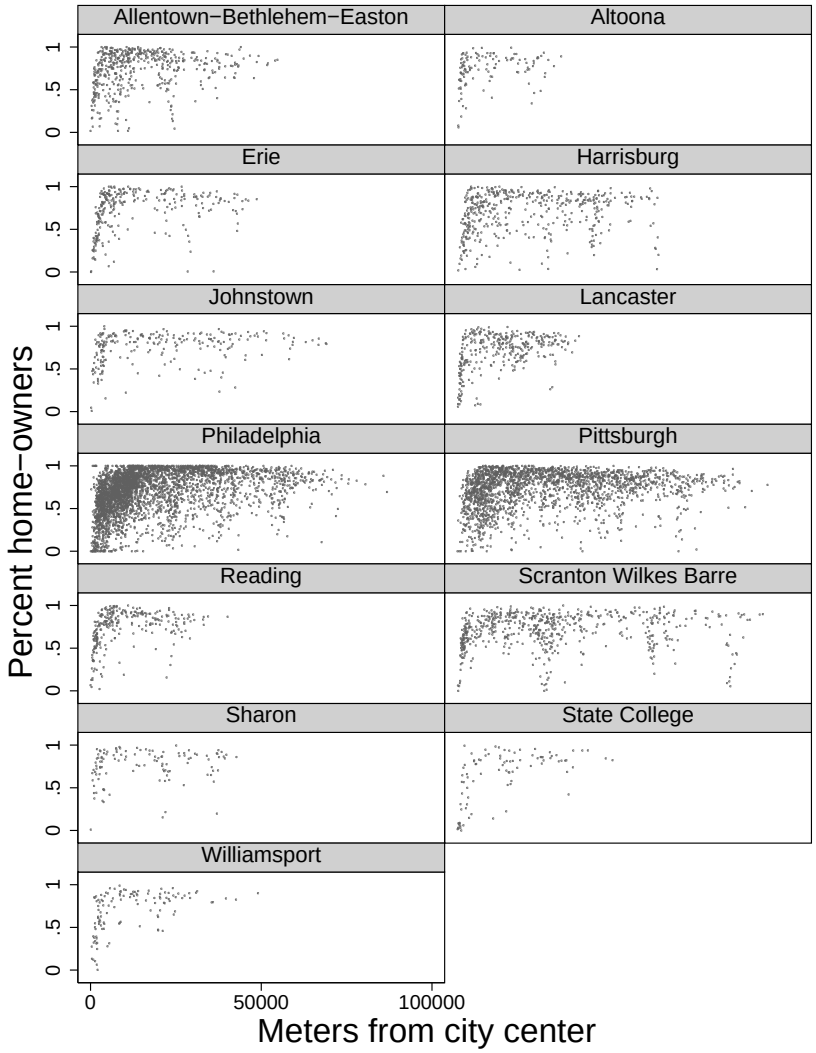


Figure 3.7: Home ownership in Pennsylvania cities



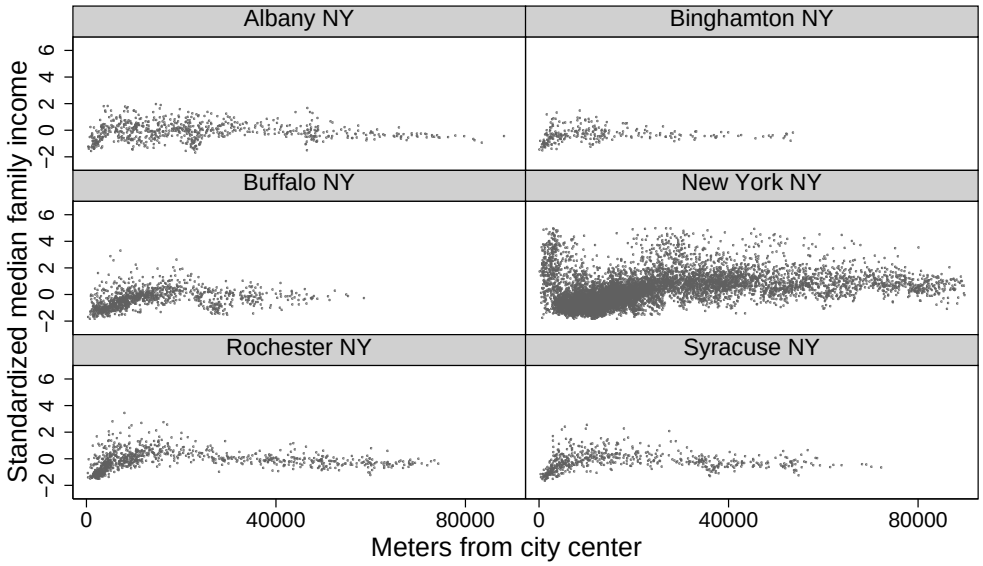
Taken together, Figures 3.6 and 3.7 indicate that the relatively poor and predominantly minority communities of the urban core in Pennsylvania's cities are primarily occupying the rental housing constructed in the era of rapid industrialization.

Next, let us quickly examine whether these patterns can be generalized beyond Pennsylvania. Figure 3.8 examines the spatial distribution of income in the largest agglomerations in the state of New York.[1] Again, the familiar pattern is found in all of New York's large cities. Like Philadelphia, of course, New York city has a large concentration of very high-income census blocks in midtown and the upper West and East sides, but

[1]Note that the Albany MSA includes Troy and Schenectady, which accounts for the additional low-income clusters in the graph.

Figure 3.8 helps put their glittering prosperity in perspective. They constitute a thriving island of commerce, amenities, and residences surrounded by a very large, poor "girdle" of the kind described by Engels, which is then surrounded by the wealthy suburbs of Long Island and Westchester County.

Figure 3.8: Income in New York cities



The graphs of race, home-ownership, and year of home construction in New York's cities (not presented to save space) look very similar to those in Pennsylvania. In fact, throughout the manufacturing core of the Northeast and Midwest, the graphs look remarkably similar for all cities, from large metropolitan areas like Detroit or Cleveland, to the smaller manufacturing agglomerations that sprang up along railroad lines, like Kalamazoo, Michigan or Bryan, Ohio. The working-class residential buildings constructed near 19th and early 20th century factories continue to house some of the poorest Americans, many of whom are minorities, and most of whom are renters. Many of these are descendants of those who moved North during the great migration. Others are more recent migrants working in the service industry, and a non-trivial number of these are from other countries.

This pattern is not limited to the original Northeastern manufacturing core. It is present in the South and West as well, though with varying levels of intensity. The pattern is quite pronounced in the more industrialized and urbanized Southern states like Georgia (Figure 3.9), North Carolina, Texas, and Florida. One partial ex-

ception, to be examined in greater detail later in the book, is in parts of the deep South like South Carolina and Mississippi, where as a legacy of slavery and the plantation economy, significant populations of poor African Americans reside in rural rather than urban areas.

Figure 3.9: Income in Georgia cities

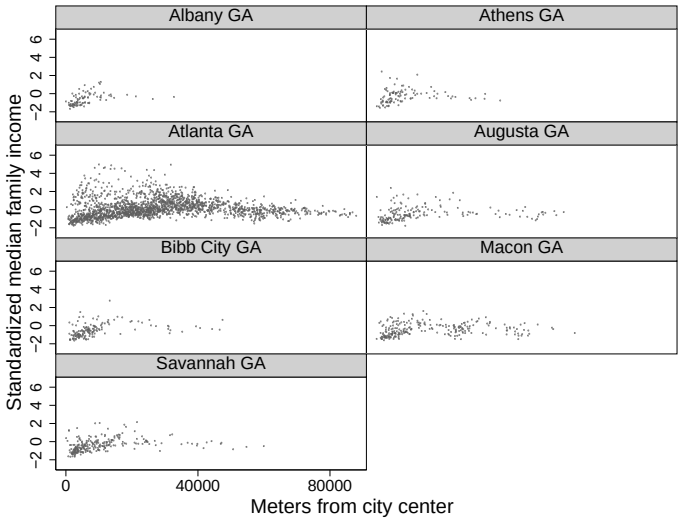


Figure 3.10: Income in selected cities of the Mountain West

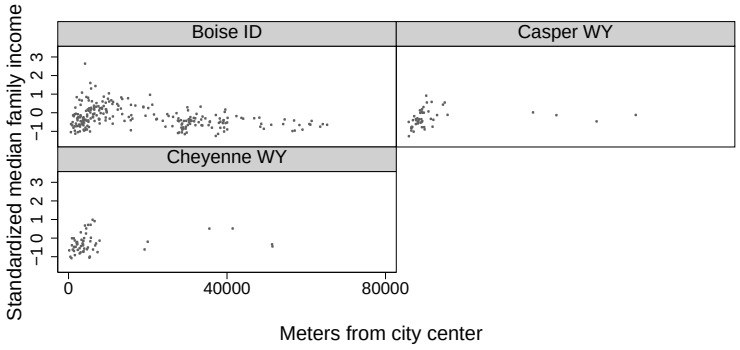
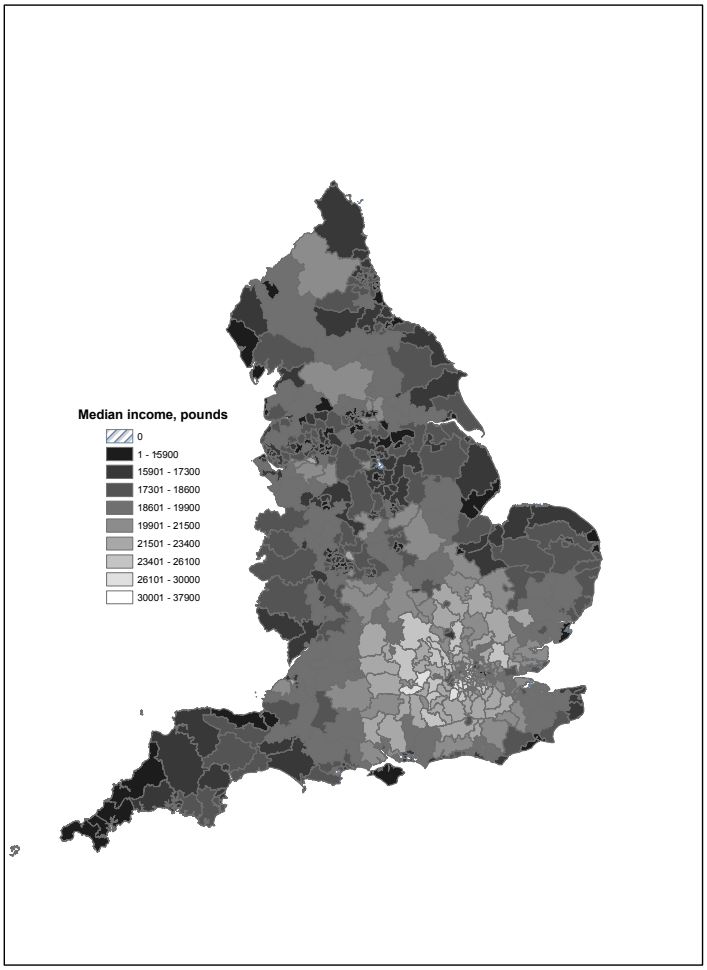


Figure 3.9 demonstrates that clusters of low income can be found even in the cities of the (mostly white) agglomerations of the Mountain West, where the poorest neighborhoods are in city centers and the wealthiest

are in suburbs, with rural areas somewhere in the middle.

In the South and West as well, urban centers of virtually all sizes are characterized by residential housing that was constructed before World War II that is occupied by renters.

Figure 3.11: Median income, UK Parliamentary constituencies

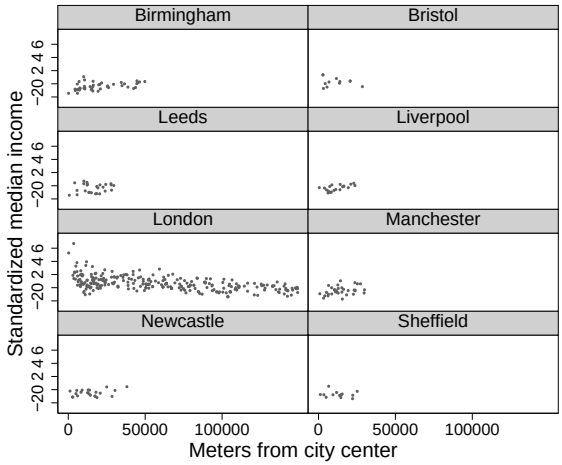


England

I do not yet have sufficiently granulated geo-referenced English census data to reproduce the graphs above. For the current draft, I rely on data aggregated to the level of Westminster parliamentary constituencies, which are far larger than the optimal level of aggregation for examining urban form. Nevertheless, British electoral

constituencies are quite small relative to those in the United States and there are several constituencies in most urban areas, so that the constituency-level data provide at least a plausible first cut. (Note, I will include Scotland and Wales in the next draft).

Figure 3.12: Median income, selected UK Parliamentary constituencies



First, let us examine the median income of each constituency. To maintain consistency with the previous graphs, lighter shades in Figure 3.11 are associated with higher income. Figure 3.11 shows that as in the United States, a substantial share of low-income districts are found in areas of dense urban housing associated with 19th century industrialization. Like their American counterparts, most English industrial agglomerations, along with former mining areas, contain a dense cluster of low-income rental housing that was constructed during rapid industrialization.

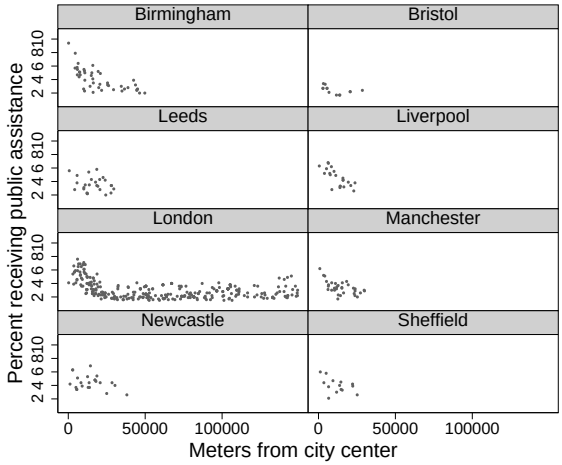
It is useful to return to the graphs that array each geographic unit according to its distance from the city center. I selected the centroid of the most central constituency in each of England's largest cities, and calculated the distance (in meters) to all other constituency centroids. Figure 3.12 displays median income in this format.

Though containing far fewer observations, these graphs are somewhat reminiscent of the U.S. graphs above. In most of the cities in Figure 3.12, there is a dense cluster of low-income constituencies near, or directly in, the city center, and the median income of these constituencies is often around two standard deviations below the national mean. As in the United States, each city also has a relatively prosperous suburban periphery, and

median income gradually increases as one moves away from the city center.[2]

As with New York City and to a lesser extent Philadelphia, London displays a different pattern than the smaller industrial agglomerations. There is indeed a very dense cluster of low-income districts surrounding the central city, and a steady rise in median income as one moves out into the suburban periphery, but as in New York, some of the wealthiest neighborhoods in the entire country are to be found directly in the center of the metropolis. As in New York, many of these are more than three standard deviations above the national mean.

Figure 3.13: Public assistance, UK Parliamentary constituencies



One possible problem with these income graphs is that they include post tax-transfer income, and if many urban dwellers are recipients of public assistance, the graphs may understate the difference between central cities and their peripheries. To examine this possibility, Figure 3.13 graphs the percent of the population receiving public assistance against distance from the city center. It demonstrates that within English metropolitan areas, the unemployed and other recipients of public assistance are highly concentrated in the urban core.

Next, it is also useful to examine home ownership. Figure 3.15 looks quite similar to the United States. While the vast majority of homes in the suburban and rural periphery are owner-occupied, rental housing is concentrated in close proximity to the city center. The census data also indicate a much higher concentration of

[2] A challenge is that as with Pennsylvania's river-valley agglomerations, the cities of England's Northern industrial regions also spill into one another. I attempt to deal with this by cutting off the display of information in each graph at around the point where the next city begins.

the population living in council homes in and directly around the city center.

Figure 3.14: Home ownership, selected UK Parliamentary constituencies

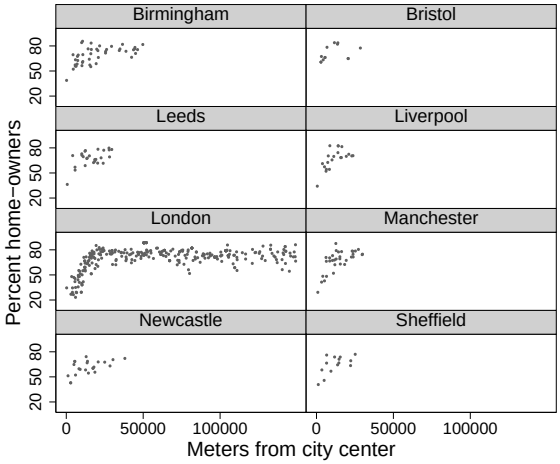
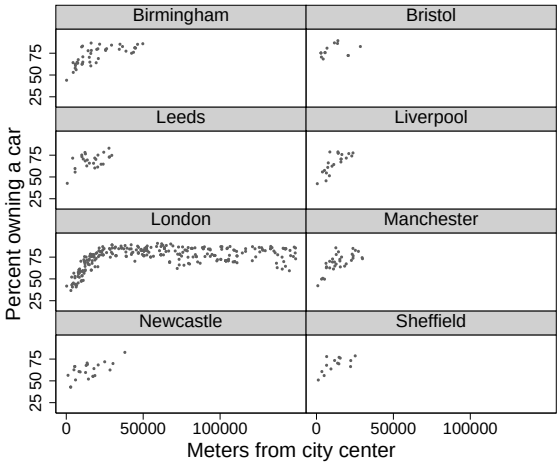


Figure 3.15: Car ownership, selected UK Parliamentary constituencies



Finally, it is useful to note that car ownership is a clear function of distance from the city center. Somewhere near a majority of the population relies on public transportation in the districts of the urban core, and as with home ownership, the percent of the population owning a car is an increasing function of the residential distance from the city center.

(Note, in the next draft I intend to include block group type graphs of similar variables for Canada, France, New Zealand, and Australia.)

3.2.4 Variations on a theme

The persistence of the urban wealthy

A distinction is emerging in the graphs above. In smaller industrial agglomerations, the dense working-class housing constructed during the industrial revolution in close proximity to the central city is now occupied by low-income renters who rely on public transportation.

However, a different pattern is seen in some of the largest agglomerations, like London, New York, and San Francisco, where the 19th century city center was never abandoned by the wealthy, and the residential sections of the central city are ostentatiously wealthy. The cities are still surrounded by the large, densely populated, low-income "girdle" described by Engels, but the income graphs above demonstrate a sharp upward hook in the city center.

This is true of many of the world's great cities. In some cities that experienced intense industrial activity in proximity to the city center, the persistence of a high-income urban core has come about through concerted efforts at slum clearance and redevelopment. In some neighborhoods, the row-houses, apartment buildings, and cottages built for workers in the 19th century have been refurbished for the new urban elite that prefers a short commute, a car-free lifestyle, and urban amenities. In other cases, the wealthy have been lured to the city center by luxurious new constructions. For instance, by looking at Figures 3.4 and 3.6 above, one can see that the median year of home construction for some of the wealthiest census blocks in Philadelphia's resurgent core is very recent.

In many European and Latin American cities, the industrial revolution never substantially undermined the desirability of the urban core for the rich in the first place. In cities like Stockholm, Barcelona, and Sao Paulo, wealthy urban centers of commerce and finance developed along with attractive, high-income residential neighborhoods. This was already taking place prior to industrialization, and when factories were constructed, they were built far from the glittering city center. Some of the wealth generated by the industrial revolution was then funneled into the construction of impressive urban amenities like museums, orchestras, and universities.

The working class housing was built in the periphery, and in contrast to American cities, the densest sections were on the outskirts rather than in the center. In this type of city, the suburbanization of the wealthy, though not completely absent, is incomplete, creating the hook on the far left in the graphs of London, New York, and Philadelphia above, along with a more heterogeneous suburban periphery. The same can be said of cities where neighborhoods in and around the urban core are characterized by natural beauty. Beaches and attractive views of oceans, lakes, and mountains can generate and sustain density among the wealthy, especially along coastlines, as in Chicago, San Francisco, Sydney, Auckland, and so on.

In some cities, the government played an active role in building working-class housing in the urban periphery at different times during the 20th century. The most famous examples are around Paris, but a similar housing strategy was pursued in many European cities as well as in Latin America, Australia, and New Zealand. These housing developments were often advertised by governments as attempts to allow workers to experience fresh air and less crowded conditions away from the city center and in proximity to newly built transportation hubs. But by the early 20th century, in maturing cities the only undeveloped land available for such dwellings was in the periphery.

Natural resources

In some industrial agglomerations, the concept of a single city center does not quite apply. Rather, a cluster of dense settlements coalesced around a corridor of industrial growth in an area with no clear preexisting city center (Hohenberg XX). Examples include Staffordshire and the Potteries, Le Creusot, and on a larger scale, the Ruhr. Parts of Southern Ontario and New Jersey have this quality as well.

In many of these agglomerations, the geography of the settlements is clearly driven by the physical presence of natural resources. In Northern France, a line of relatively dense, industrialized cities and towns emerged in the Pas-de-Calais Department following a seam of coal that was discovered in the middle of the 19th century. A similar pattern can be seen in the Lackawanna River valley of Pennsylvania, where a densely populated, contiguous quilt-work of anthracite coal mining communities grew up around Scranton, Wilkes-Barre, and Carbondale. In an era of high transportation costs, communities built on ore extraction often developed broader industrial bases in related refining processes as well as steel production and railroad construction.

Even after the mines closed and the heavy industry departed, the built environment endures. Unlike the typical mono-centric city, this built environment is characterized by a long strip of dense, affordable housing, often along a river valley or seam of coal that brought 19th century migrants. Just as in the textbook cases of Manchester or Detroit, the working class housing associated with an earlier era of rapid industrialization in these

settings continues to represent the densest available housing, and it is home to many of the poorest individuals.

3.3 Urban form and voting

The previous section demonstrated some of the lasting demographic legacies associated with the construction of dense housing developments in and around cities and natural resource points in the era of heavy industry. Above all, these neighborhoods tend to be populated by relatively poor renters who do not own automobiles, and many of them are minorities or recent immigrants to the region or even the country.

In some cities, the segment of this dense housing that is in closest proximity to urban amenities, beaches, or coastal views has attracted an affluent class of urban dwellers that has chosen to eschew the automobile-centered lifestyle of the suburbs. In the grittiest agglomerations, this class is completely absent, but in cities with sufficient natural beauty or man-made amenities, it can be quite large.

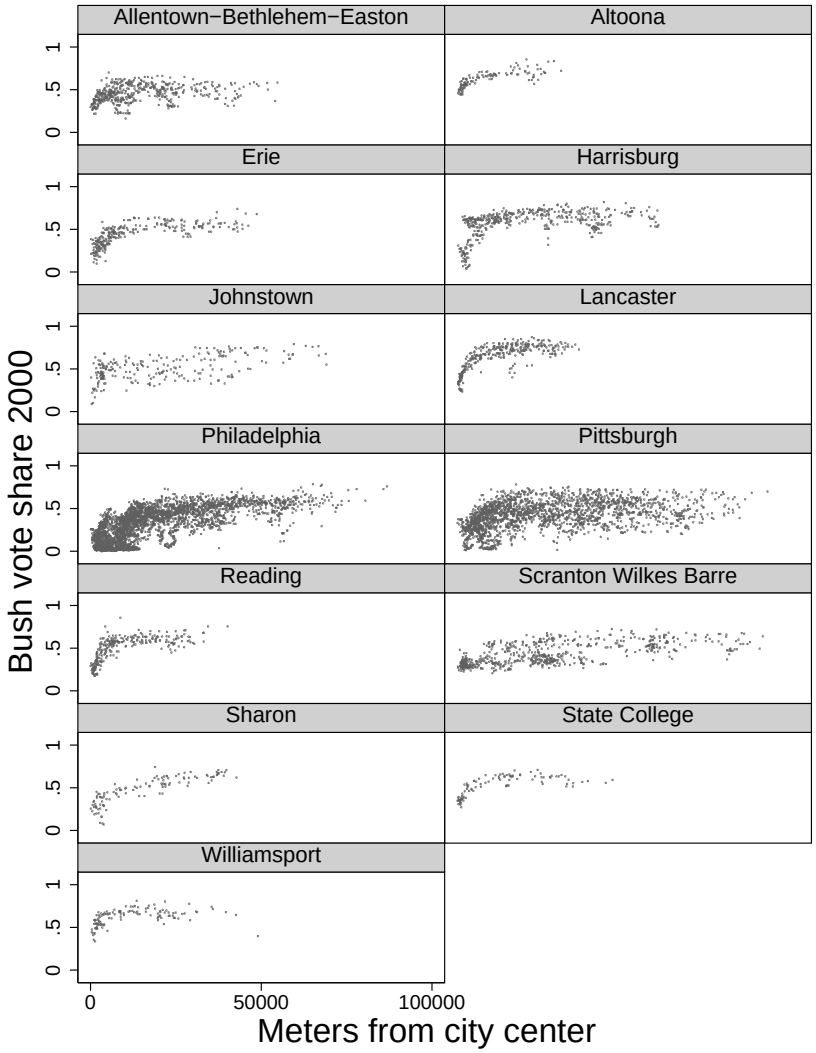
This section draws on fine-grained electoral data to show that even after the factories are shuttered and the labor unions have lost their influence, the urban poor who work in the service sector and inhabit the buildings constructed for the manual workers of an earlier era are targets for the mobilization efforts of the same left-wing political parties that recruited their predecessors. Perhaps more surprisingly, the left has achieved some success in attracting the votes of the more affluent urbanites as well. As a result, the legacy of the industrial revolution is a striking spatial concentration of support for leftist parties in densely populated areas.

3.3.1 The United States

Now that we have examined the spatial arrangement of demographics within metropolitan areas, it is useful to apply the same analysis to voting behavior. Let us begin, once again, with Pennsylvania. By using geo-referenced precinct-level results of the 2000 presidential election, it is possible to examine partisanship as a function of the distance from the city center.

The graphs are quite striking. The vertical axis represents George W. Bush's share of the two-party vote. It shows that Albert Gore's support was extremely concentrated in urban areas. There are hundreds of precincts in downtown Philadelphia and Pittsburgh where Bush received less than 20 percent of the vote. Yet there are very few precincts anywhere in the state where Bush prevailed by a similar margin.

Figure 3.16: Bush vote share in Pennsylvania cities



As one travels from the urban core, one moves from overwhelmingly Democratic urban precincts to hotly contested, evenly divided suburban precincts, to a moderately Republican rural hinterland. The graphs have a shape that is now quite familiar from the graphs of income, race, and housing presented above, and if anything, the electoral graphs are tighter and cleaner.

Yet subtle differences in the demographic and political graphs are also worth noting. While the shape of the income graphs are quite similar overall, note that the sharp upward hook in the income graphs around the city center in Philadelphia and Pittsburgh are completely lacking in the electoral graphs. That is, the (very) high-income urban precincts appeared to be staunchly in favor of Gore. Not a single precinct in downtown

Philadelphia even approached 50 percent.

Nor is the relationship only about the distribution of racial groups. Cities like Altoona, State College, Williamsport, Scranton, and Wilkes-Barre are overwhelmingly white, and the sharp downward hook in the Bush vote share simply cannot be explained by the presence of minorities in the urban core.

Figure 3.17: Bush vote share in New York cities

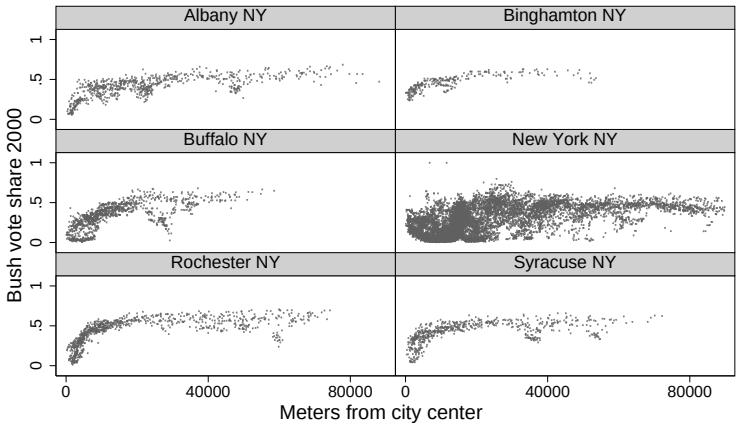
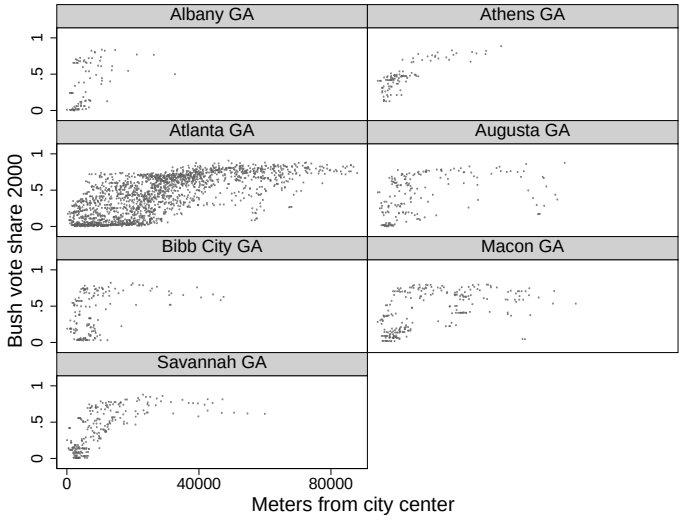


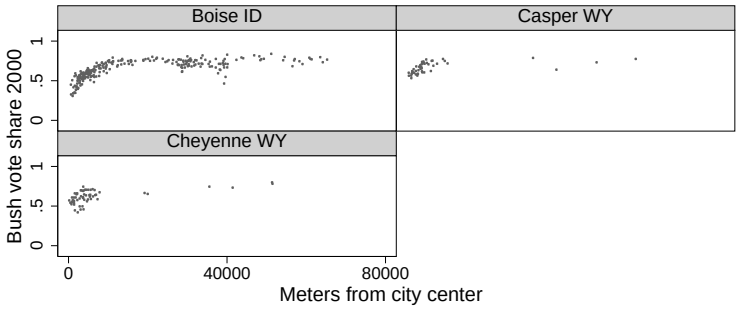
Figure 3.18: Bush vote share in Georgia cities



The relationship between urban residence and voting is remarkably similar in almost every city in the United

States. Space constraints prevent the display of the relationship for a large number of cities, so once again, I present a sampling of the industrialized Northeast (New York), the South (Georgia), and some cities in the mountain West.

Figure 3.19: Bush vote share in selected cities of the mountain West



A similar pattern obtains throughout the United States. Rural areas lean Republican, rather overwhelmingly so in parts of the South and West, but only very slightly so in much of the Midwest and Northeast. But whenever one encounters a significant agglomeration, the Democratic vote share increases, moderately as one enters the suburbs, and then quite dramatically as one moves into the urban core. The pattern is most pronounced in the largest agglomerations, but it is unmistakable even in relatively small cities and towns. While a reasonable number of votes for Democrats can be found in the rural periphery, votes for Republican presidential candidates are exceedingly rare in American central cities— even those with extravagantly wealthy centers, like San Francisco, Chicago, and New York (see Figure 3.17).

Moving beyond a sample of metropolitan statistical areas so as to include all census block groups in the state, a good way to visualize this relationship is in Figure 3.20, which plots the Republican presidential vote share against the logged population density for each block group in all 21 states for which it was possible to link up 2000 census data with geo-referenced 2000 precinct-level election results. The population density data are standardized to have a (national) mean of zero and standard deviation of one.

Figure 3.20: Population density and Bush vote share, census block groups

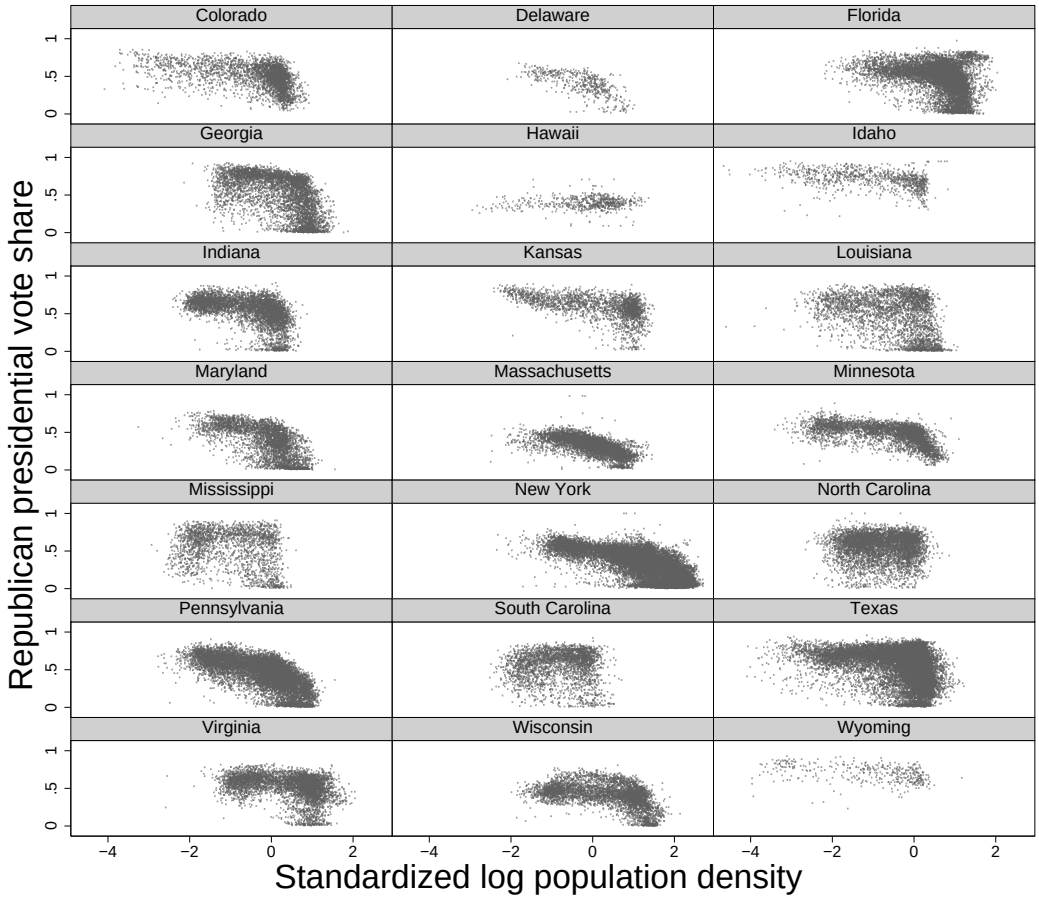


Figure 3.20 shows that a strong negative relationship between population density and Republican presidential voting is quite common across a diverse assortment of states. The relationship is strongest in the states that experienced significant industrialization before World War II. While still present, the relationship is much weaker in the less industrialized states of the West, like Wyoming and Idaho, and the South, like South Carolina and Mississippi, and it is missing altogether in Hawaii.

Mississippi and South Carolina are interesting outliers. While the graph looks similar to other states as one moves from (locally) moderate to relatively high-density census blocks and sees a corresponding increase in the Democratic vote share, the left side of the graph is different, in that an inverted U begins to take shape. When one moves from medium-density areas to very low-density rural areas, one encounters a large number of rural African American census block groups, and of course these communities vote overwhelmingly for Democrats. The presence of dispersed rural Democrats sets these states apart. Note that the left-hand side of the inverted

U begins to form in a less pronounced way in Virginia, Georgia, Texas, North Carolina, and Louisiana as well, largely due to the presence of low-income rural minorities.

Note that the lower-right corner of the graphs, corresponding to high density and high Democratic vote share, are especially populous and the slope is steepest in states that have especially large and dense cities where a substantial number of block groups are characterized by population density that is more than one standard deviation beyond the national average.

Another interesting source of variation has to do with density gradients. In states like North Carolina, Texas, and Georgia, where the sprawling, non-compact metropolitan areas developed in the era of the automobile, the urban core and suburban periphery are larger and less dense, and spill into one another. In the graphs, the difference in population density between the Democratic central city and the Republican suburbs is less dramatic, which has the effect of making the bend as one approaches the "blade" of the "hockey stick" shape more pronounced. In contrast, the negative relationship has a more linear appearance in the states like Massachusetts and Pennsylvania, where the difference in both density and voting behavior between the urban core and the suburban periphery are sharper.

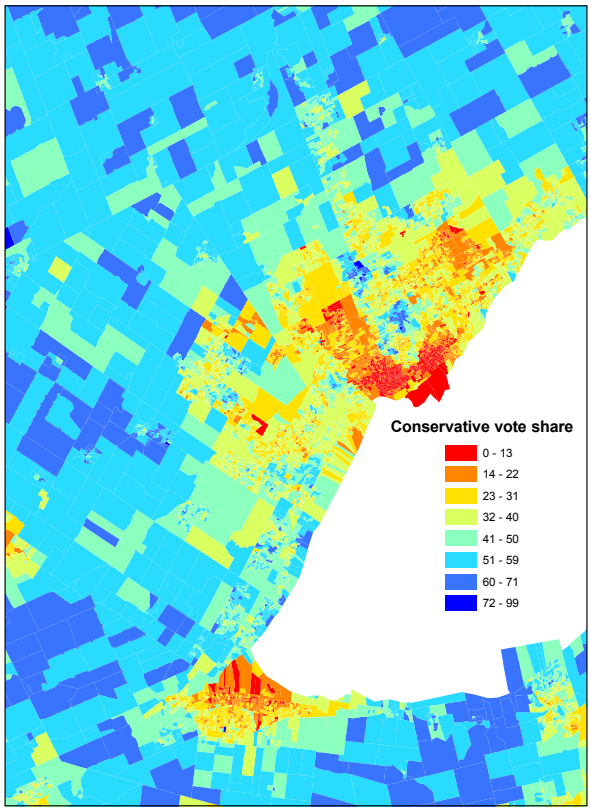
While these variations are interesting, and will be exploited in later chapters, the key lesson for now is the strength and ubiquity of the relationship between population density and voting in the United States.

3.3.2 Canada

One might suspect that this pattern has something to do with unique aspects of the history of slavery, the great migration, and racial segregation in U.S. cities. The popular perception is that the departure of affluent whites from American cities like Detroit and Newark after the race riots was an especially important moment in the history of economic decline in American cities.

Is the United States exceptional? It is useful to examine whether the same pattern prevails North of the border in Canada. Like Pennsylvania, Ontario industrialized rapidly in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. In addition to the large industrial agglomeration of Toronto, Southern Ontario developed a web of closely connected industrial cities along railroad lines and at natural resource points like Hamilton, Kitchener, and Sudbury.

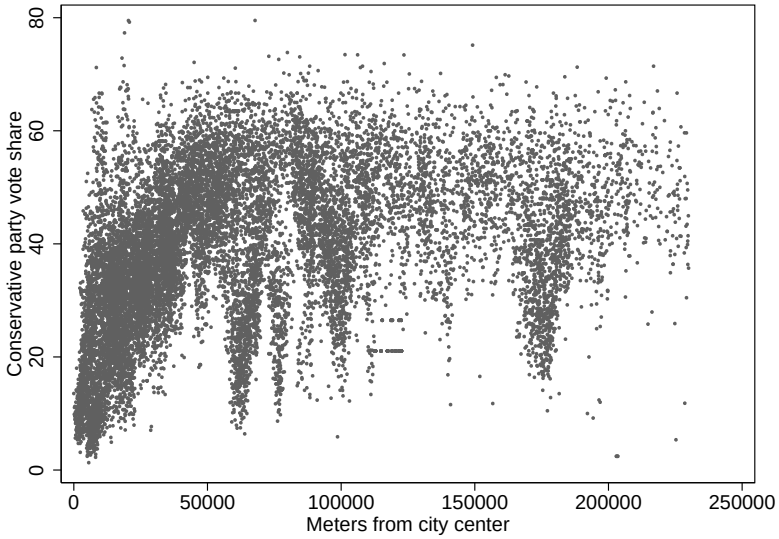
Figure 3.21: Conservative vote share in Toronto and Hamilton



Fortunately, the Canadian government has recently produced maps of the boundaries of polling districts, which are similar in scale to the precincts used in the analysis above. Figure 3.21 presents a map of voting behavior in Toronto and Hamilton, Ontario using data from the 2008 parliamentary election. For reasons that are explained in detail in later chapters, the Canadian "left" is divided between the centrist Liberals and the social-democratic New Democratic Party (NDP), so it is most straightforward to examine the vote share of the Conservative Party of Canada, which monopolizes the right side of the political spectrum.

The political geography of Toronto is very similar to New York or Philadelphia. In has a ring of dense and relatively poor neighborhoods that vote very reliably for the left, as well as a central core that is wealthy and fashionable but extremely leftist in its political orientation. Hamilton exhibits a very similar political geography on a smaller scale.

Figure 3.22: Conservative vote share in Toronto and Southern Ontario, 2008

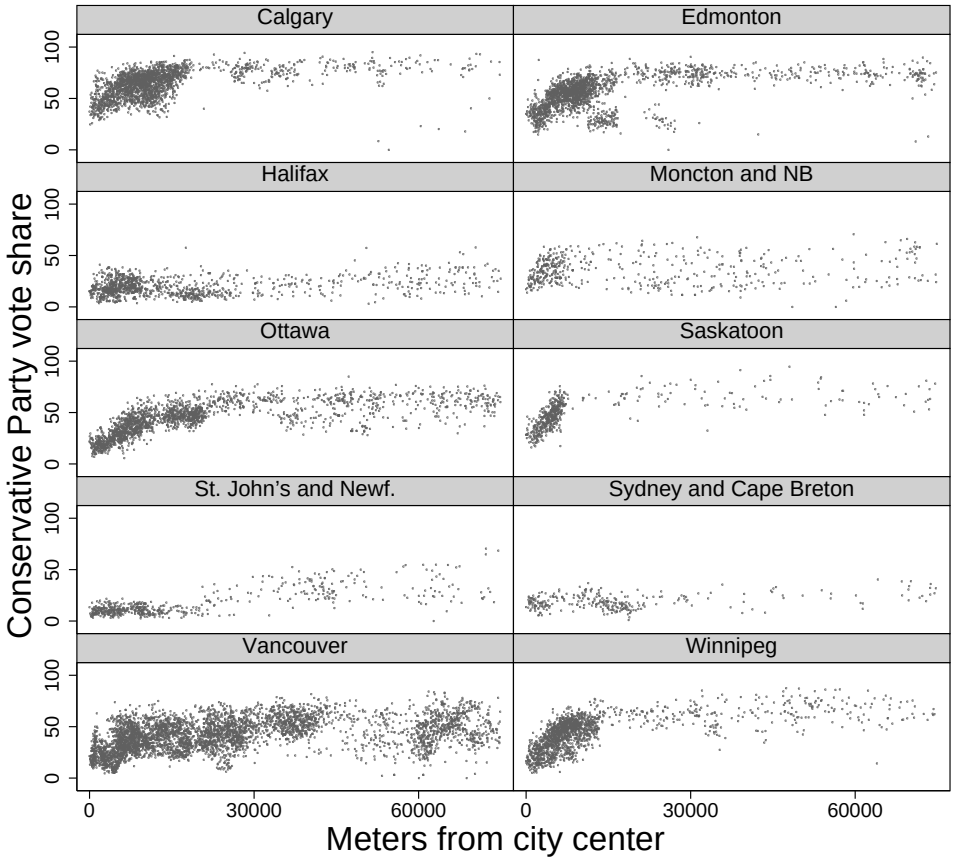


In fact, the same can be said for virtually all of the other agglomerations of Ontario (often minus the fashionable, high-income city center). Figure 3.22 mimics the U.S. graphs presented above. It shows that the center of Toronto votes overwhelmingly for the left, but the vote share of the right increases steadily as one moves to the suburbs, and then hovers slightly above 50 percent in rural Southern Ontario. Then, the graph displays what appear to be a series of stalagtites, each of which corresponds to one of Southern Ontario's cities: St. Catherines, Hamilton, Guelph, Kitchener, and so on. The lowest point at the tip of the stalagtite is the left-dominated city center, with a small suburban periphery that grows increasingly conservative as one moves out in either direction until one reaches the moderately Conservative periphery again.

Now, let us examine whether this pattern can be seen beyond Southern Ontario. Leaving the complexities of Quebec politics for a later chapter, Figure 3.23 examines the relationship between the distance from the city center and the Conservative vote share in some of the largest cities in other regions of Canada.

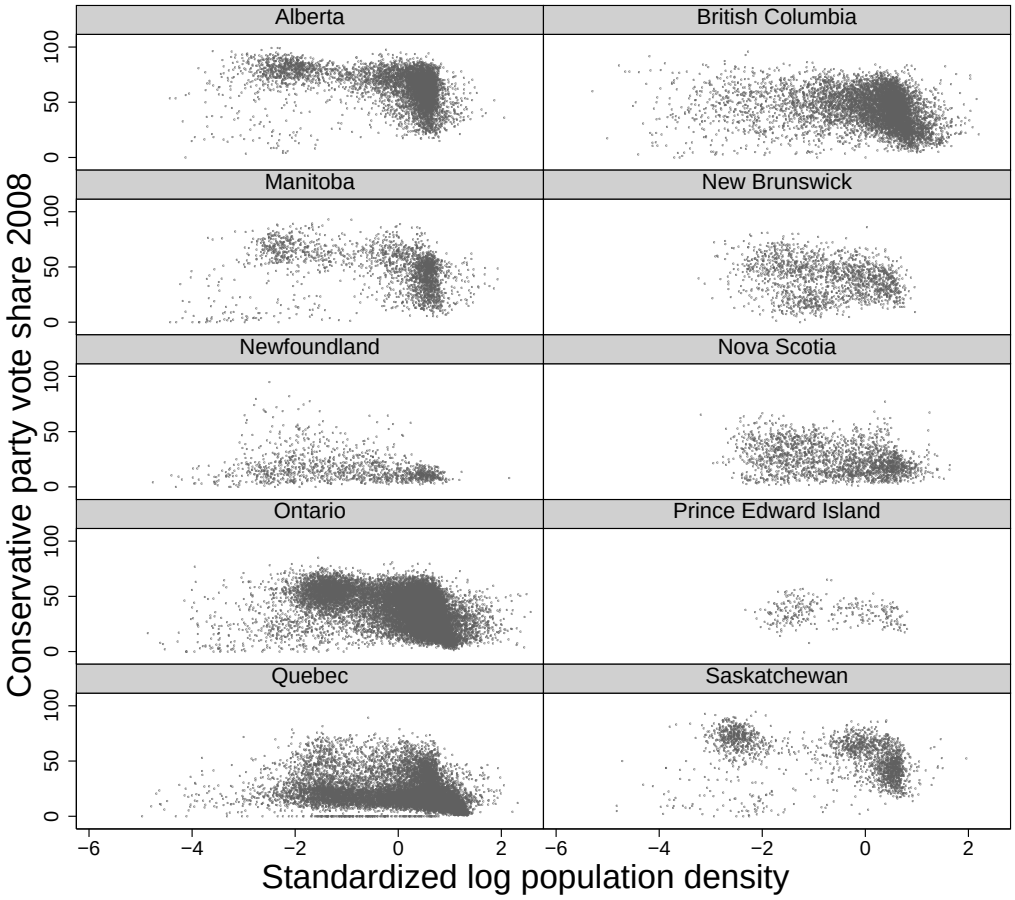
First, although Alberta justifiably has a reputation for being extremely conservative, and the rural baseline polling districts hover at around 75 percent Conservative, note that Calgary and Edmonton are characterized by a linear increase in left voting as one approaches the city center, though even the most leftist downtown Edmonton districts still do not approach the left vote share of Toronto or Ottawa. Left voting is also quite concentrated in downtown Vancouver and Victoria, and it is extremely concentrated in the city centers of the prairie provinces, like Saskatoon, Regina (not shown), and Winnipeg.

Figure 3.23: Conservative vote share in selected Canadian cities, 2008



On the whole, the relationship between left voting and urban form is quite striking in Ontario, the prairies, and the West. The only exception is in the seedbed of Canada's industrial revolution: Atlantic Canada. In downtown Halifax and Sydney, Nova Scotia, and St. John's, Newfoundland, the vote share of the left is indeed overwhelming, but this is also true for the rest of the province, and the increase in right voting as one moves to the rural periphery is far less dramatic. In Nova Scotia, industrial activity is spread throughout the regions around Halifax and Cape Breton, and throughout Atlantic Canada, left voting is common in rural communities with a history of commercialized fishing, forestry, and natural resource extraction.

Figure 3.24: Population density and 2008 Conservative vote share, polling districts



As in the U.S. analysis above, Figure 3.24 plots the relationship between the population density of polling districts and the Conservative vote share by province. The sprawling urban form of Alberta and the prairie provinces creates the hockey stick shape that characterized some of the Southern and Western states in the United States, whereas the relatively compact, dense, and homogeneously leftist cities of Ontario create a more linear relationship that is reminiscent of the U.S. states of the 19th century manufacturing core.

However, in contrast with most of the U.S. states outside the deep South, rural left-leaning voting districts are more common in Canada. In Atlantic Canada, they undermine the relationship between density and voting almost completely, and in the rest of Canada, there is a smattering of very sparse polling districts that vote overwhelmingly for the left.

In fact, largely because of the rural roots of the Cooperative Commonwealth Federation (CCF), the forerunner of the NDP, Canada is somewhat famous for its history of rural socialism (Lipset XX). However, this

analysis shows very clear that as in the United States, left voting in Canada is highly concentrated in densely populated urban neighborhoods.

3.3.3 Australia and New Zealand

The cities of Australia and New Zealand also experienced an explosion of population growth and industrialization in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, and accordingly, a boom in the construction of working-class housing in proximity to docks, factories and warehouses.

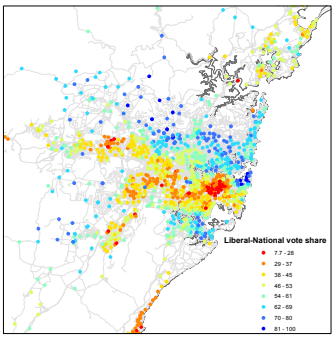
But Australia and New Zealand are somewhat unique in that virtually all of their large cities are located directly on the waterfront, and most are blessed with beautiful scenery. Moreover, in the 20th century, both experienced substantial government investment in the construction of public housing for low-income individuals, and much of this housing construction took place in the urban periphery rather than directly in the city center. More recently, some of the remnants of the old working class housing have been removed and replaced with luxurious condominiums, while remaining classic workers' cottages and row-houses have become expensive and desirable targets of the wealthy urban elite. In contrast to many of the rusting and polluted urban centers of North America, the cities of Australia and New Zealand are quite wealthy.

Nevertheless, votes for left-wing parties are as stubbornly concentrated in dense urban neighborhoods today as they were in the era of heavy industrialization and labor union activism.

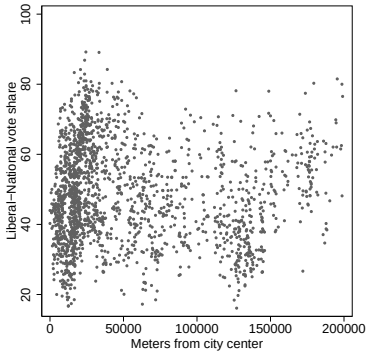
In order to create Figures 3.29 through 3.31, I have obtained polling-place level data on electoral results, along with addresses of those polling places. From those addresses, it is possible to ascertain the geographic coordinates of each polling place and then draw maps and calculate distances, as in the other countries above.

First, let us examine metropolitan Sydney. The map in Figure 3.29 makes it clear that when it comes to political behavior, Sydney is a remarkably segregated city. The 19th century core votes overwhelmingly for Labor. Whether they house low-income service workers or chic boutiques, the urban neighborhoods characterized by row-houses and cottages are still Labor strongholds. Moreover, the neighborhoods containing public housing built for workers in the 20th century are quite dense and vote overwhelmingly for Labor.

Beyond the central city and the old industrial and working-class neighborhoods, that follow the river, support for Labor gently declines to the South and West, but because of the natural barrier created by Sydney Harbour and the Parramatta River, unlike many of the North American cities examined above, the transition from left-wing urban core to conservative suburbs is quite abrupt as one moves North from the central city. There is also an extremely wealthy and conservative neighborhood directly to the East of the central city.

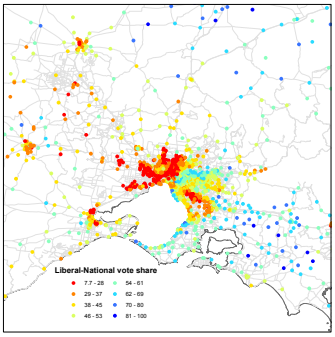


(a) Liberal-National vote share in Sydney

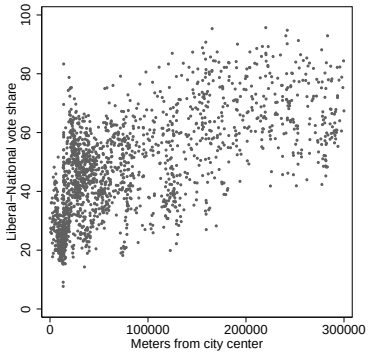


(b) Liberal-National vote share and distance from city center

Figure 3.25: The geography of voting in metro Sydney, Australia

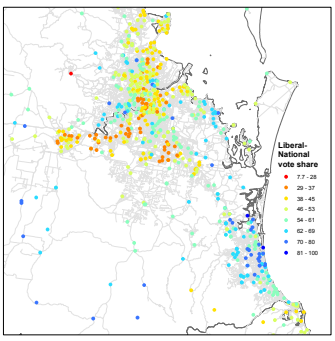


(a) Liberal-National vote share in Melbourne

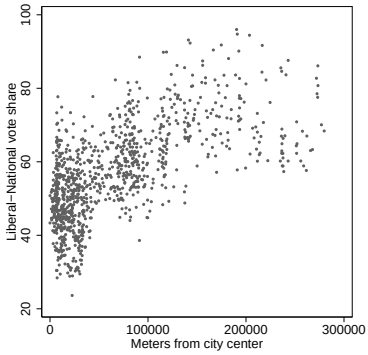


(b) Liberal-National vote share and distance from city center

Figure 3.26: The geography of voting in Melbourne, Australia



(a) Liberal-National vote share in Brisbane and Gold Coast



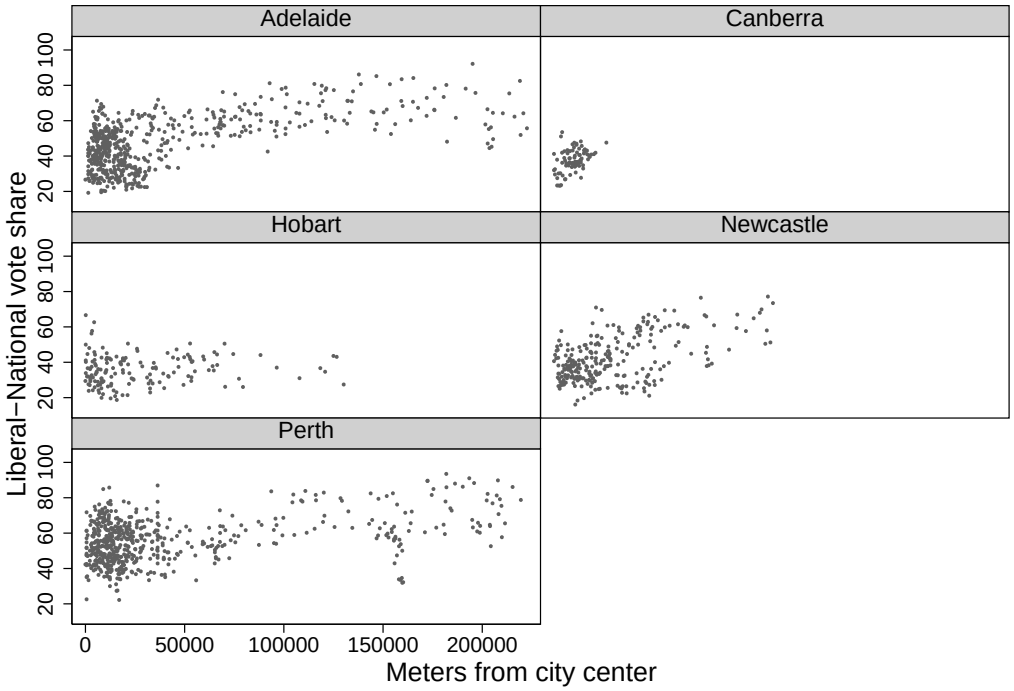
(b) Liberal-National vote share and distance from city center

Figure 3.27: The geography of voting in Brisbane, Australia

Thus the graph of electoral behavior and distance from the city center is not as clean as in some other cities.

Figure 3.29b indicates a sharp rise in right voting as one moves to the Northern suburbs, but some diffuse Labor polling places in the exurban periphery. Sydney has dense left-wing enclaves relatively far from the city center in part because of the construction of entire neighborhoods of public terrace houses (e.g. Blackett and Dharruk, which constitute the red outpost to the West in the map). Ever further from the city center, Sydney also has some surrounding 19th century industrial agglomerations with dense housing and strong labor support (e.g. Woolongong, the red outpost to the far South in Figure 3.29a).

Figure 3.28: Liberal-National vote share in selected Australian cities

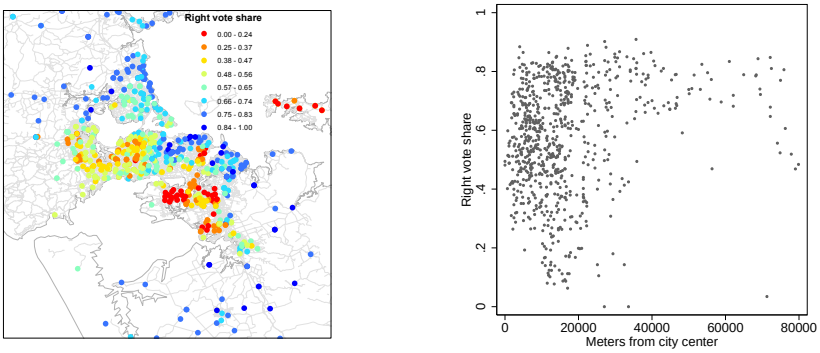


Next, in Figures 3.26 and 3.27, Melbourne and Brisbane display a pattern that is now becoming quite familiar. Support for Labor is highly concentrated in the city center, and the vote share of the right increases quickly as one leaves the city center, eventually leveling off in the rural periphery.

Figure 3.28 provides graphs for several additional cities. Since the eventual goal is to explore implications for districting, and Australian electoral districts cannot cross state boundaries, each graph is limited to polling places within the state or territory (this is why the Canberra periphery is empty). Adelaide, Newcastle, and Canberra exhibit the familiar pattern, as does Perth to a lesser extent. Tasmania is reminiscent of Newfoundland and Prince Edward Island, in that left voting is somewhat concentrated in Hobart, but it remains quite high in the more rural parts of the island.

To sum up, as in the United States and Canada, the urban concentration of the left is a continuing fact of life in Australia, and it is most pronounced in the regions that experienced the greatest industrialization in the early part of the 20th century.

The story is quite similar in New Zealand. Working with addresses provided by the electoral commission, I have also been able to obtain the geographic coordinates for polling places in New Zealand, and produce maps and graphs of political behavior around New Zealand's cities. I have aggregated over all parties of the right (ACTNZ, Libertarian, National, New Zealand First, and United Future).



(a) Combined right party vote share in Auckland

(b) Right vote party share and distance from city center

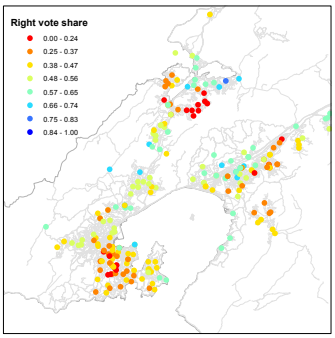
Figure 3.29: The geography of voting in metro Auckland, NZ

Auckland is politically segregated in ways that are reminiscent of Sydney. Much of the city center votes overwhelmingly for Labour, but the residents of the buildings directly along the coast are extremely wealthy and conservative. As in Sydney, the left vote is most concentrated in traditional areas of working class housing, such as the cluster of red dots along the Tamaki river, and above all, where public housing was constructed for workers in the middle of the 20th century. While some of these clusters are proximate to the city center, like Glen Innes, which is just East of the city center, many of these developments are well to the South of the center. As in Sydney, the simple linear relationship between distance from the city center and voting behavior is affected not only be attractive coastal real estate and suburban working class housing construction, but also by the presence of a harbor that creates an abrupt barrier between working-class neighborhoods of the core and high-income suburbs.

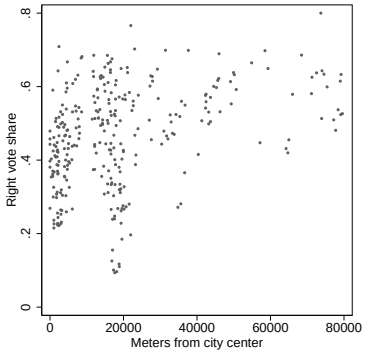
Moving to the Southern tip of the North Island, Wellington, along with its surrounding agglomerations, provides another classic example of an overwhelmingly leftist industrial agglomeration surrounded by moderately conservative suburbs and a very conservative rural hinterland. In Wellington and its satellites, the legacy of working class housing is especially clear. Since the 1880s, the New Zealand Railways Department provided

homes for some of its workers, especially in the period immediately after World War I, when an entire suburb was built for railroad workers around Lower Hutt outside Wellington. In Figure 3.30, one can still see a line of left-wing polling places along the railroad tracks in Lower Hutt (the small agglomeration on the right side of the map).

In downtown Wellington, some homogeneously left-wing polling places cluster around a public housing project called Dixon Street Flats, and as one moves south, one passes through Newtown, a working class suburb that is now gentrifying with an ethnically diverse influx of immigrants, students, and young professionals. Further South is Berhampore, another government housing project from the 1930s, which corresponds today with another cluster of red dots in Figure 3.30. The other obvious cluster of exceptionally leftist polling places, in the small agglomeration to the North of downtown Wellington, called Poirurua, corresponds to one of the most notoriously dense and poor government housing projects in New Zealand.

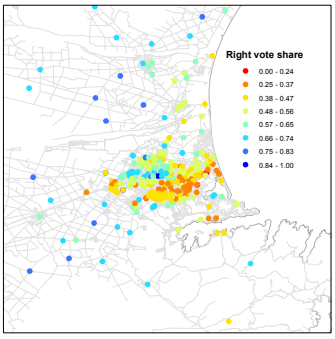


(a) Combined right party vote share in Wellington

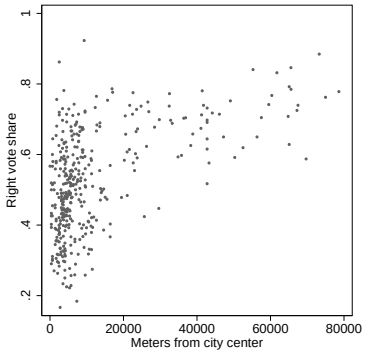


(b) Right vote party share and distance from city center

Figure 3.30: The geography of voting in Wellington, NZ and surrounding cities, NZ



(a) Combined right party vote share in Christchurch

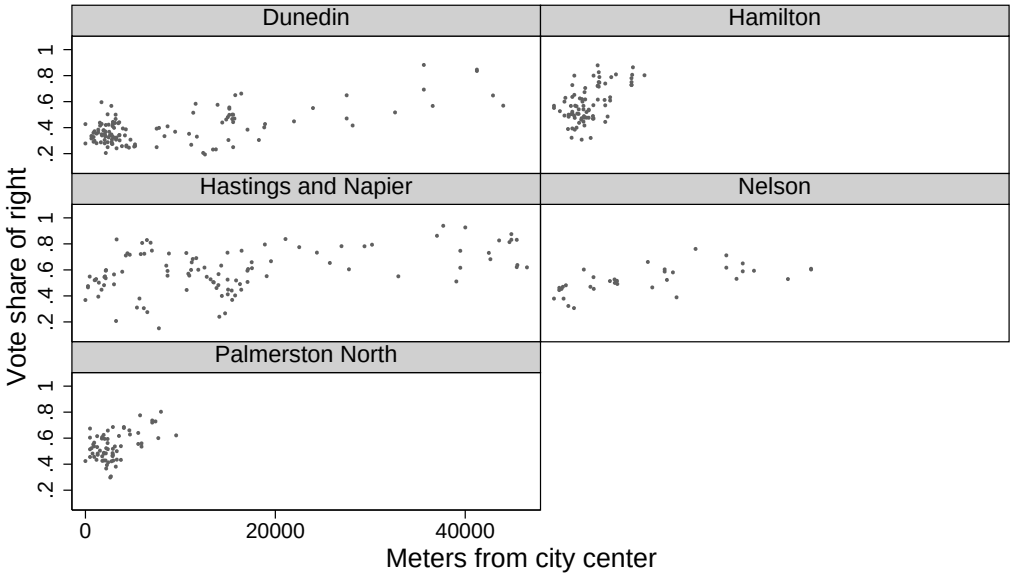


(b) Right vote party share and distance from city center

Figure 3.31: The geography of voting in metro Christchurch, NZ

The story is quite similar in Christchurch, displayed in Figure 3.31. As in Sydney and Auckland, a strip of traditional working-class housing running East to West is still home to reliable left voters, with a gradual transition to the right as one moves into the suburban and then rural periphery. Again, the history of public housing is important. Some of the leftist polling places in the Southeast are around Sydenham, which was home to many workers employed in local factories around 1900, and was the site of government construction of workers' flats in 1905. Over the next 20 years, the government constructed workers' dwellings in neighborhoods to the West of the core, and these are still left-wing outposts today.

Figure 3.32: Combined conservative party vote share in selected New Zealand cities



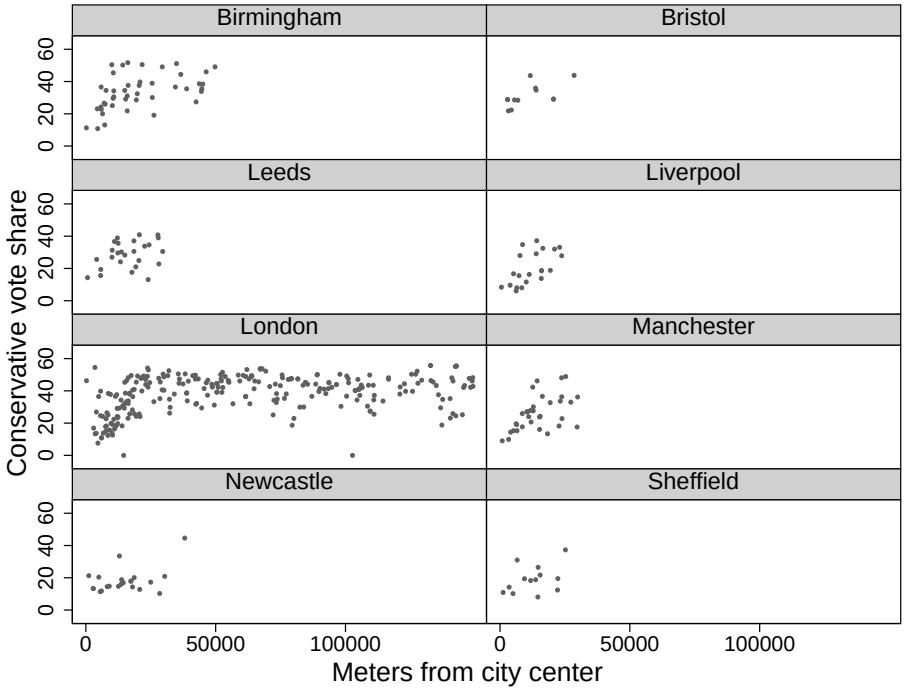
Right parties include ACTNZ, Family, Libertarian, National, NZ First, and United Future

Figure 3.32 extends the analysis to some additional New Zealand agglomerations. The same basic pattern appears even in relatively small agglomerations like Hamilton, Hastings, Napier, and Nelson. In Dunedin and Parlmerston North, the relationship has more to do with the presence of large universities in the city center than with the legacy of working-class housing.

3.3.4 England

Finally, let us briefly examine England, where polling-place level data are unavailable, and the only available strategy is to use parliamentary constituencies as the unit of analysis. In spite of the high level of aggregation, Figure 3.33 does indicate the familiar pattern once again.

Figure 3.33: Conservative vote share in selected English cities



Around each of these agglomerations, Labour (and sometimes Liberal) voting is quite concentrated, usually in or very close to the city center, and support for the Conservatives increases slowly as one moves toward the pivotal suburban periphery, eventually reaching a stable, dominantly conservative equilibrium in the countryside. Note that because of their proximity to one another, the graphs for Liverpool, Leeds, Manchester, and Sheffield have been cut off somewhere in the suburbs without fully reaching the rural periphery. In the industrialized heartland, Labor concentration spills from one city to the next, and in the dense corridors connecting these cities, Conservative vote shares max out at around 40 percent.

Moving beyond a sample of rather artificially constructed zones around cities, perhaps the best way to visualize the relationship is with a scatter plot of conservative voting against district population density.

Figure 3.34: Conservative vote share and population density, England

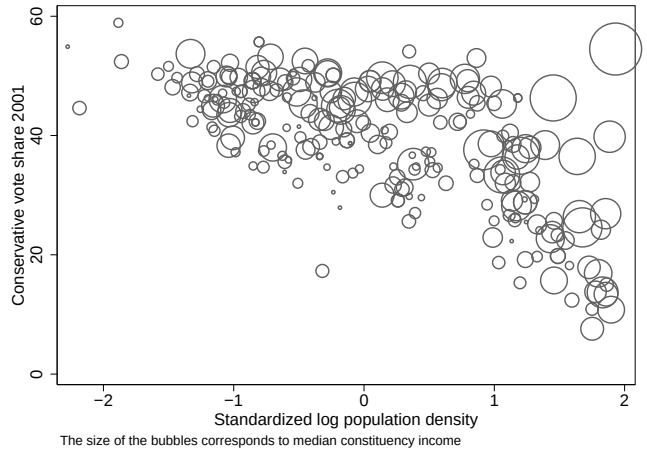


Figure 3.34 provides such a plot, but adds one interesting twist: the size of the round markers for each constituency corresponds to its median income. Above all, we see that there is a relatively strong relationship between constituency population density and left voting, as in other countries. Moreover, the larger markers tend to be higher in the graph than the smaller markers, indicating a higher vote share for the Conservatives among the wealthier districts, and this is true at every level of density. The graph also drives home the status of the outliers in the upper right corner. These very dense but Torie districts are the wealthiest in all of England.

The graph also suggests that while relatively wealthy districts are indeed more likely to vote for the Conservatives, some of the urban strongholds of the left, as in Canada and Australasia, are not exactly poor. Quite simply, the relationship between population density and left voting cannot be reduced to the concentration of poor people in cities. In fact, as in Australia, many of the poorest constituencies in England are quite rural, and some of the wealthiest are quite dense.

3.4 Just what is it about cities?

Figure 3.34 raises an interesting question. If the correlation between density and left voting cannot be explained by income, can it be explained by something else? Perhaps the presence of low-education service sector workers, students, minorities, renters, or immigrants? The story told in this chapter is primarily about the built environment that emerged along with the industrial revolution, and the evolution of urban form that unfolded thereafter. It is clear from the evidence presented above that much of the urban concentration of the left can indeed be traced to the presence of these social groups in the dense urban neighborhoods created by that transfor-

mation. Leftist parties have continued to offer platforms that appeal to these groups on an economic dimension of political conflict related to taxation, redistribution, and social insurance, while perhaps also instilling some deeper attachment or identification.

Yet the evidence also suggests there may be slightly more to the story. In cities with certain types of urban amenities, a small but non-trivial proportion of the urban leftist voting bloc is educated, wealthy, and part of the racial majority. The maps and graphs above create the impression that population density might have an impact on voting behavior that cannot simply be reduced to census categories. Indeed, a little further investigation bears this out. In order to generate some of the figures that appeared earlier in the chapter, I have merged precinct-level election results and block group-level census demographics for over 100,000 block groups in 21 states. In regression models, logged population density has a large and statistically significant impact on voting behavior in presidential elections. [3] When one adds a wealth of census demographics to the model as covariates, including age structure, home ownership, race, income, occupation, and the the like, the coefficient on the population density variable goes down, but only rather modestly, and its statistical significance does not change. One can obtain a similar result using individual-level survey data from surveys like the American National Election Survey, the Annenberg National Election Survey, and the General Social Survey. Even controlling for a wide variety of individual-level covariates, individuals living in dense urban neighborhoods are more likely to report voting for Democrats.

This type of analysis can also be extended to both aggregate and individual-level data in other countries. In Australia, Canada, and the UK, it is possible to obtain district-level census aggregates for a wide range of demographic variables. In each of these countries, in multiple regressions that attempt to explain vote choice, the large and significant coefficient for district population density is quite stubborn in the presence of covariates that capture factors like social class, income, immigration, race, occupation, age, and the like. The same is also true when one models individual vote choice using the National Election Studies in these countries and examines the effects of the respondents' place of residence: controlling for a wide range of factors, urban residence is associated with reported left voting.

In short, it is plausible that urban residence "matters" in its own right. There is probably something more to the nexus of density and left voting than the continuing presence of poor people, minorities, and recent migrants. But what is it? This is a fascinating and difficult question, but one that this book will not attempt to answer, largely because its central argument does not depend on the answer. Yet before moving on, it is worthwhile to briefly consider some of the competing possibilities.

[3] As demonstrated above, the exceptions are Hawaii and a pair of Southern states with large rural black populations.

The emerging evidence suggests that at least in the United Kingdom and some of its former colonies, individuals with the exact same profile of observable attributes like race and income might exhibit different political behavior depending on their place of residence. This is a claim that has been made repeatedly in the British electoral geography literature. For example, Butler and Stokes (XX) and many others have discovered that working-class voters in urban working-class constituencies are much more likely to vote for Labour than working-class voters living in middle-class suburban constituencies. To borrow from the language of experimental design, this kind of empirical observation might represent either selection—whereby leftists choose to live in cities—or treatment, whereby cities actually "cause" leftist attitudes in the way that an experimental intervention is believed to cause a difference between a treatment and control group.

3.4.1 Selection

First, let us consider selection. Schelling (XX) provides a model in which "like" individuals have a preference to congregate with their own kind, and over a period of time, groups tend to segregate into homogeneous neighborhoods. This type of model is one of the explanations sometimes offered for racial residential segregation. One might also distinguish between sorting by race or income, and the possibility of sorting purely on political preferences. As cities and towns became bastions of the left in the early part of the century, perhaps they became targets for migration of leftists living uncomfortably in more heterogeneous settings, while suburbs and exurbs became targets for migration of those with more conservative preferences who found themselves increasingly uncomfortable in cities. A version of this story has recently gained favor in the popular press in the United States (Bishop 2008).

A subtly different story might emerge from the type of sorting described by Tiebout (1956), where individuals sort themselves into the jurisdictions that offer their preferred bundles of taxes and services. To the extent that those who prefer the bundles offered by suburbs have different political views than those who prefer the bundles offered by cities, this could generate the clustering observed above. With its decentralized system of education finance, this possibility has received the most attention in the United States, where the trade-offs between urban and suburban residence are driven in large part by preferences over property taxes and schools. More generally, cities have cost advantages that allow them to specialize in the provision of certain public goods, like museums and zoos, and people with strong preferences for such public goods might be more likely to live in cities. As with preferences over property taxes and schools, such preferences over public goods might also be correlated with political preferences.

In addition to the consumption of public services offered by governments, a similar logic might apply to res-

idential decisions that are driven by opportunities for private consumption. Often owing to their density and the investments in amenities that date to the era of industrialization, cities offer unique consumption opportunities, ranging from cuisine to the arts, and they offer a lifestyle choice that is quite different from suburban or rural areas. Suburbs offer a different type of consumption involving larger living space, more land, and shopping malls with easy parking. Survey researchers (and political consultants) have noticed remarkably high correlations between consumption behavior and political preferences, and it is plausible that the same individuals who find themselves drawn to easy parking and shopping malls are also drawn to the platforms of conservative political parties, and those who are drawn to sushi restaurants and coffee shops are also drawn to the appeals of the parties of the left.

Concretely, urban gentrification is a process that exemplifies this type of sorting. In the 19th century, the cramped row houses of Sydney, Boston's South End, and San Francisco's North Beach were not particularly fashionable. But row houses in close proximity to the city center and all of its consumption opportunities have become quite desirable for young, educated individuals with a certain profile of consumption and lifestyle preferences. Such neighborhoods become transformed by an influx of young professionals, and as rents go up and working-class residents are priced out, the vote shares of leftist parties remain remarkably constant.

In these selection stories, two individuals with an identical profile of characteristics—say a married 30-year old white female with a bachelor's degree and a comfortable middle-class salary—one living in the city center and the other living in a suburb—have different political preferences, and they choose different residential settings. If this happens on a large scale, it aggregates into a difference in the average left party vote share across the two residential settings that cannot be attributed to obvious individual-level attributes, but the residential setting does not have an independent impact on political preferences.

3.4.2 Treatment

Another possibility is suggested in the massive literature in sociology and political science on "contextual" or "neighborhood" effects (e.g. Johnston and Pattie 2006). Through a variety of mechanisms, the residential setting might have a more direct impact on individual political preferences or behavior. Through local networks of communication with friends and neighbors, the preferences or voting behavior of the majority in a neighborhood can be strengthened, and newcomers who find themselves in the minority can be persuaded or intimidated to join the majority. Once the majority in a neighborhood becomes affiliated with a party, as with early 20th century working class neighborhoods and the left, newcomers gradually come to identify with the neighborhood party, much like a local sports team.

In addition to communication with friends, neighbors, and coworkers, contextual effects might be generated by the mobilization efforts of political parties. The previous chapter suggested that left-wing parties developed a strong presence in urban districts early in the century, and it is plausible that those party organizations endured, and played a crucial role in continuing to mobilize new migrants who replaced the dwindling industrial workforce in the traditional working class neighborhoods. Likewise, conservative parties had a head start that predates the industrial revolution in many rural areas.

Moreover, the experience of living in a particular residential setting can shape one's political preferences in a way that does not necessarily depend on communication with neighbors or party canvassers. Someone who moves from a sparsely populated, car-oriented neighborhood to a dense city for some exogenous reason might gain a new appreciation for public transportation. Even a high-income urban resident living in close proximity to the poor might develop an appreciation for social programs that seem to make the neighborhood safer. In contrast, the externalities associated with poverty might be less noticeable in the daily life of a middle-income resident of a suburb or rural area.

3.4.3 Does it matter?

These are fascinating possibilities, but the job of differentiating between them poses serious challenges to empirical researchers. An urban British worker in the North may well be different from a suburban worker in the South (Butler and Stokes XX), and a high-income urbanite in the American Northeast may be quite different from a high-income rural Southerner (Gelman XX), but surveys and contextual data cannot tell us whether this is because certain types of people select into certain residential settings, or because the residential settings influence people. These questions pose fascinating questions that require innovative research designs (e.g. Enos XX, Gay XX), but they need not concern us further here. The relationship between urbanization and left voting has been around since industrialization in Europe and Australasia, and since the Great Depression in North America. The rest of this book sets out to explore the implications of this geography for the transformation of votes to seats, and for the transformation of preferences to policies. In answering the first question, it matters very little why Democrats or Labour voters are concentrated in cities.

However, in order to answer the second question, it is necessary to look beyond voting behavior and attempt to understand the geographic distribution of political preferences. For instance, if some of the stories about gentrification and consumption-based sorting are true, it is possible that the ideological basis of the "urban left" has changed subtly in recent decades, such that the difference between urban and non-urban voting behavior is based increasingly on social or moral issues relative to economic issues. Perhaps higher-income individuals

who make a conscious choice to live in an urban neighborhood rather than a suburb have a profile of preferences that might be described as "secular" or "cosmopolitan." Perhaps those who value the diverse consumption and experiential opportunities offered by cities, and are less concerned about challenges like parking and crime, are also characterized by a personality type that tends toward rejection of traditional moral values. Likewise, perhaps those who choose to live in suburbs or rural areas do so because they feel more comfortable interacting and raising children in a more socially conservative environment.

These are not new ideas. Already in Victorian England, suburbanization was celebrated as a way of combating the moral ills of city life and the disorder of revolutionary France, a way of promoting the primacy of the individual family unit against the moral flaws associated with communal parenting (Roger XX). According the Lipset and Rokkan (1967), even before the industrial revolution there was already a substantial non-economic divide between the "orthodox-fundamentalist beliefs of the peasantry and the small-town citizens and the secularism fostered in the larger cities and the metropolis" (p. 12). Moreover, quite aside from selection, it is also plausible that city life encourages secular values and acceptance of immigrants and alternative lifestyles. Without explicitly addressing the riddle of selection and treatment, Chapter 5 addresses this class of questions.

3.5 Conclusion

This chapter has uncovered a rather striking regularity in industrialized democracies: votes for parties of the left tend to be highly concentrated in densely populated cities. Often the areas of greatest support for leftist parties are directly in the city center, and support for the right increases gradually as one moves from the city to the suburbs, then increases further as one moves into the rural periphery. Sometimes the central business district or waterfront neighborhoods contains pockets of high-income conservatives, and sometimes the dense, left-wing pockets are not directly in the urban core. Sometimes the dense left-wing neighborhoods are in a string of settlements along a transportation route or deposit of minerals. But these are mere variations on a theme: the built environment associated with the industrial revolution created a geography in which leftist parties, even at the dawn of the 21st century, are essentially urban parties.

Chapter 4

Drawing Electoral Districts in the Shadow of the Industrial Revolution

4.1 Introduction

Chapter two demonstrated that when socialists entered the electoral fray in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, their support was highly concentrated in the districts of the industrial working class. As a result, we saw that histograms of their support distributions across districts had a pronounced right skew. For reasons that will soon be clear, this is not an optimal situation for transforming votes to seats in a two-party system. But as emphasized in chapter two, these were not two-party systems, and socialist leaders were often more concerned with how to coordinate with, and then eventually how to kill off their other competitors on the left. Thus some countries emerged from the turbulence of the early 20th century with the same electoral rules they started with. Along the way, they developed a strong internal constituency for the retention of single-member districts among their urban incumbents.

Next, in chapter three, we learned that even though industrialized societies have gone through immense transformations over the course of more than a century, many of the dense urban neighborhoods that came to be dominated by the left in the era of rapid urbanization are still dominated by the left. For a variety of reasons, it is simply a fact of life in many industrialized societies that individuals with leftist preferences and voting proclivities live in neighborhoods with higher population density than do right-wing voters.

This chapter examines the implications of these stubborn facts of urban geography when equal-population winner-take-all electoral districts must be drawn. It shows that the urban form described in the previous chapters

tend to generate electoral maps in which left-wing voters are more concentrated within districts than right-wing voters. In other words, the skewed histograms of left-wing party support from the early 20th century are facts of life in the shadow of the industrial revolution.

Using a series of hypothetical and real-world examples, this chapter explains why this is the case, and begins to explore implications for the translation of votes to seats. First, it takes a closer look at the process of drawing electoral districts in the presence of a correlation between political preferences and population density. It shows that when the election results from polling places displayed in the previous chapter are aggregated into electoral districts, standard districting procedures will tend to generate a skew in the distribution of support for leftist parties across districts. While Americans tend to believe that asymmetric "packing" of partisans within districts is a function of overt partisan or racial gerrymandering, this chapter shows that an asymmetric clustering of leftists arises as an outgrowth of residential patterns even when districts are drawn by non-partisan districting commissions or even computer algorithms.

The second part of the chapter then turns away from precinct-level data, and examines a large body of district-level data drawn from the entire post-war period. It demonstrates that a skew has been present in the distribution of support for political parties across districts since World War II in the United States, Britain, Australia, Canada, and New Zealand.

4.2 Drawing electoral districts in industrialized societies

4.2.1 An example

The correlation between population density and voting behavior explored in the previous chapter is more than an interesting curiosity. It can actually determine who wins and loses elections, and whose policy agenda is implemented. As a first step toward understanding this, consider a hypothetical distribution of left- and right-party voters, L and R, that is inspired by the graphs and maps in the previous chapter.

Figure 4.1 considers a city, like San Francisco or New York, that developed on a peninsula. Population density gradually declines as one moves away from the city center, which emerged in proximity to the seaport. In fact, the economic geography of city formation in an era of water-borne transportation often creates city centers that are located directly on bodies of water, or on rivers that ended up marking the boundary between countries, states, or provinces. Thus in many cities, districting is constrained on one, two, or as in the example in Figure 4.1, on three sides. While the logic described here also applies to cities without borders or bodies of water to constrain districting around the city center—-e.g. Denver, Indianapolis, Minneapolis, or Atlanta—-the

example in Figure 4.1 keeps things as simple as possible.

Figure 4.1: Hypothetical vertical districting plan

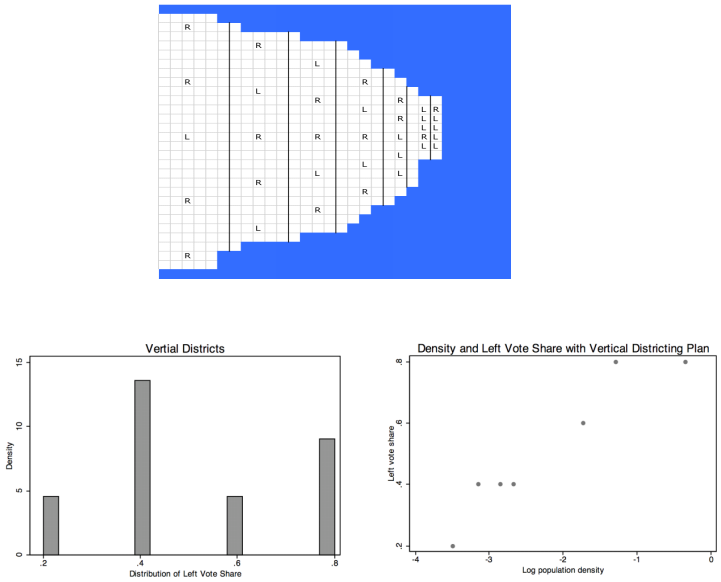


Figure 4.1 reflects a typical American or British pattern of suburbanization. As one traverses the distance from the city center to the distant suburbs, one moves from a densely-populated neighborhood that is solidly controlled by the party of the left, then crosses some medium-density suburbs of mixed partisanship, and eventually ends up in a solidly conservative rural hinterland. Of course this can also happen in four directions, as in Minneapolis or Indianapolis.

The region in Figure 4.1 has 35 voters. We might also think of them as perfectly homogeneous, equipopulous census blocks or voting precincts. In this example, the party of the left has a slight majority: 18-17. If everyone votes, it would win a gubernatorial or presidential election, or under pure PR, it would be able to form a government.

What happens when districts are drawn on top of this geography? The answer, of course, depends on the

manner in which districts are drawn and the number of districts that must be drawn. At the extreme, if the entire region is one district, the left wins. The same is true if each voter (or census block) gets a representative.

But let us consider a case in which the parliament will be elected from five winner-take-all districts of equal size. First, consider a districting commission that applies a rule that districts will be made of vertical lines running from North to South. An equal-population districting plan would look like the one in Figure 4.1. With this plan, the party of the left would win the three most urban districts—two of them with very large majorities—but would lose all of the remaining districts. The party of the right has a majority in the legislature.

What has happened to the *L* party's majority? Quite simply, too many of its voters are concentrated in the urban districts, where it accumulates too many "surplus" votes. It has an inefficient geographic distribution of support, displayed with the right-skewed histogram at the bottom left of Figure 4.1. But in practice, electoral districts are not drawn in this way. In England, Scotland, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand, electoral districts are drawn by independent commissions with relatively clear rules, and longitudinal strips are not among them. In the real world, these rules often require that districts be geographically compact, which can be defined in various ways, as well as contiguous. Moreover, it is common to stipulate that districts cannot cross municipal boundaries, and while different language is used in different countries, a very common dictate is that communities of interest—racial groups, language groups, or simply distinctive neighborhoods—be kept together to the extent possible.

The history and cross-state diversity of districting procedures in the United States will be addressed in much greater detail in chapter X, but for now it should suffice to say that U.S. Congressional districts as well as state legislative districts are often drawn by legislators themselves, though a handful of states have adopted reforms along the lines of the districting commissions used in Britain and its other colonies. Moreover, the districting process takes place in the shadow of state and federal courts and according to federal legislation that requires some states to conduct a rather unique form of community of interest districting so that racial minorities constitute majorities in some districts. Moreover, states have their own constitutions, laws, and court interventions related to concepts like compactness, contiguity, municipal boundaries, and communities of interest.[1]

Let us focus initially on compactness and contiguity, which are perhaps the two most basic districting principles around the world. In order to think systematically about the implications of drawing compact, contiguous

[1]Contiguity is explicitly required in 37 state constitutions, and compactness is required in 24 state constitutions. Twenty state constitutions include restrictions on the division of local government units or the transgression of local government boundaries. More recently, state constitutions including those of Oklahoma, Colorado, Hawaii, Delaware, and Arizona have added "anti-gerrymandering" stipulations that explicitly require the maintenance of communities or interest. See James Gardner (2006), "Representation without Party: Lessons from State Constitutional Attempts to Control Gerrymandering," Rutgers Law Journal 37: 881.

districts on top of a particular geography, it is useful to apply a simple districting algorithm. For example, randomly choose a census block or voter. Then, choose its nearest neighbor (randomly if more than one is equidistant). Draw a bounding box around the burgeoning district. Then add the neighbor that is most proximate to the centroid of the bounding box (again, randomly if more than one is equidistant). Continue this procedure until the target population size is reached. Then, choose the most proximate unit to the centroid of the newly created district as the seed for the next district, and begin again, selecting only from the unused units.

Figure 4.2: Hypothetical vertical districting plan

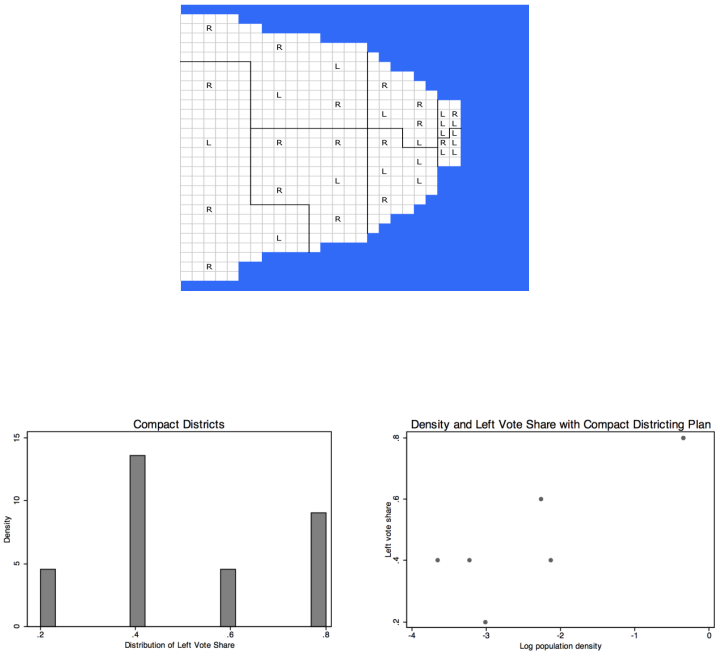
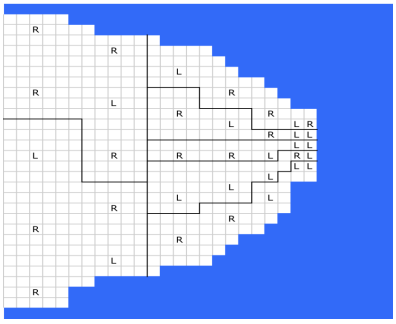
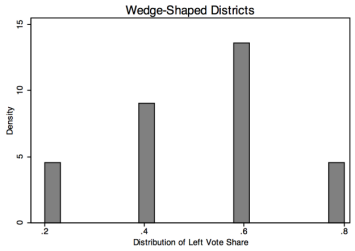


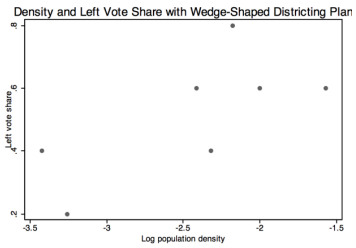
Figure 4.2 is an example of a relatively compact districting plan that would emerge from this procedure (choosing one of the urban voters as the initial seed). It has many of the same qualities as the simple vertical plan. Again, the left party's supporters are inefficiently clustered in the urban districts, the inter-district histogram demonstrates a right skew, and the right party is victorious because of its more efficient geographic distribution of support. There is nothing special about this plan. The reader is invited to quickly sketch out some districting

plans in this way. After drawing a few plans, the difficulty of the geography for the *L* party becomes apparent. It is difficult to avoid drawing plans that produce big victories for the *L* party in the districts of the urban core, but the *R* party is able to win by more modest majorities elsewhere. Thus regardless of the initial seed, the vast majority of plans drawn in this way will result in a 4-3 legislative majority for the *R* party, and some will even produce a 5-2 majority.

Figure 4.3: Hypothetical vertical districting plan







4.2.2 Can the left gerrymander its way out of the problem?

That is not to say that *none* of the plans produced in this way would produce a legislative majority for the left. There is a class of plans that would, in fact, produce a 4-3 legislative majority for the left. An example of such a plan is provided in Figure 4.3. If the party of the left is able to control the districting process and strict legal compactness criteria are not in force, it would attempt to draw a relatively non-compact plan that breaks up the

left-wing urban bailiwicks by creating wedge-shaped mixed urban-suburban districts that originate in the city center and radiate out to the suburbs. In the plan of Figure 4.3, the right party wins one minimal victory in the Northernmost hybrid district, and now its core rural-exurban voters are inefficiently "packed" in one of the peripheral districts, such that the histogram of left support now has a left skew.

Given its inefficient geographic support distribution, if it is capable of acting as a seat-maximizing unitary actor, the party of the left has three options. First, it can attempt to turn the entire metropolis into a winner-take-all district by placing all power in the hands of a winner-take-all executive. Second, it can push for proportional representation. Third, if it controls the districting process, it can neutralize its geographic problem by gerrymandering some non-compact wedge-shaped districts.

As in Chapter Two, however, we must ask whether these strategies are incentive-compatible for individual leftist incumbents, particularly under conditions of uncertainty. We have already discussed the reasons why incumbents in safe urban seats might be wary of proportional representation. But why fight a proposal to redistrict in the party's favor? Instead of viewing each *L* and *R* as exogenous, let us think of them as outgrowths of some combination of party identification, issue preferences, and retrospective policy evaluations based on voters' assessments of factors like the economy or foreign affairs. A problem for risk-averse incumbents is that due to events beyond the control of individual members of the legislature, the value of their party label can suffer a blow because the party leaders make a mistake, the economy takes a turn for the worse, or a war goes bad. Thus there is some risk that each *L* will turn to an *R* or vice-versa. We might think of the distribution of partisanship in the figure as representing what political scientists refer to as the "normal" vote: the underlying support distribution when such "valence" factors are held to zero. In districting plans like the ones depicted in Figure 4.1 or 4.2, urban leftist incumbents have a cushion in the event of a negative valence shock associated with the party label, or even a personal valence shock associated with being caught in a scandal or receiving bad publicity. The wedge-shaped plan in Figure 4.3, while increasing the probability that the left forms a government, also leaves the leftist incumbents with a very thin margin for error, and increases the probability that an unexpected event could leave them out of office altogether. Thus leftist party leaders might run into stiff resistance when attempting to push for districting reforms that would improve the party's overall chances of achieving a legislative majority.

4.2.3 Municipal boundaries and communities of interest

In addition to the strategic interests of urban leftist incumbents, there is another reason why the wedge-shaped plan in Figure 4.3 is unlikely to be observed in practice. The districting process is very often bound by rules or

norms that prohibit, or at least strongly discourage, districts that break up local government areas, municipalities, counties, and the like. In many settings, there is also a strong norm against breaking up so-called "communities of interest," such as commonly recognized neighborhoods or spatially concentrated linguistic, racial, or ethnic groups. As we have seen in the city maps from the previous chapter, dense pockets of working-class housing, whether from the 19th and early 20th century, or from the era of public housing construction in the middle of the 20th century, tend to be clustered together in distinctive neighborhoods.

In the United States, the dense urban neighborhoods where working class housing was built in the early 19th century have been occupied primarily by African Americans in most of the cities of the upper Midwest and Northeast since the great migration. The concept of non-retrogression in the Voting Rights Act effectively means that most wedge-shaped districting plans would be illegal, since in cities like Detroit and Philadelphia they would break up majority-black districts.

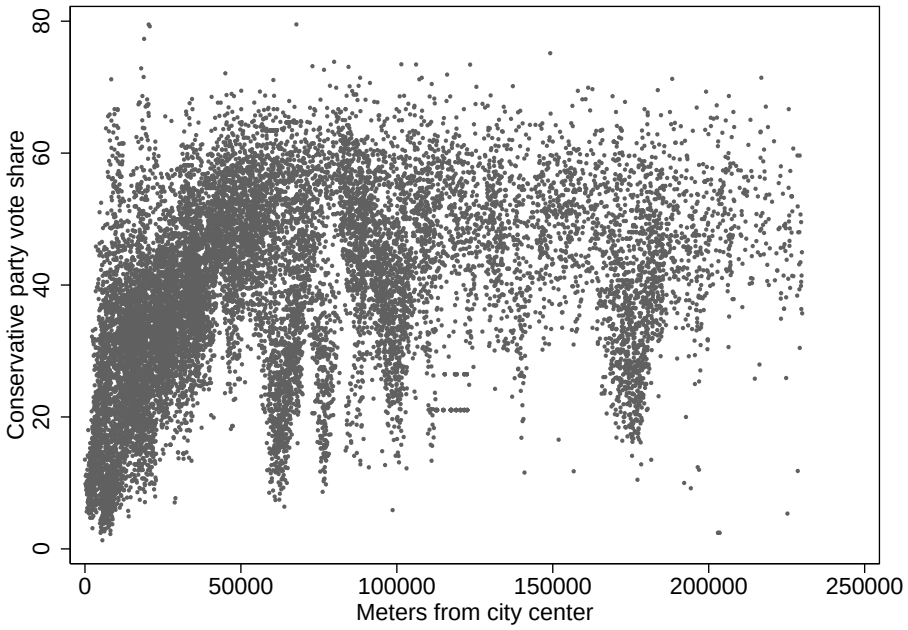
4.2.4 Can this example be generalized?

This example generates an interesting story, but it would be nice to know whether it is driven by the peninsular shape of this hypothetical metropolis, by the precise placement of each *L* and *R* in space, or by the hypothetical size of the legislature. To see the broader applicability of the argument, it is useful to return to the graphs of electoral behavior and distance from the city center from the previous chapter.

Countries with districting commissions

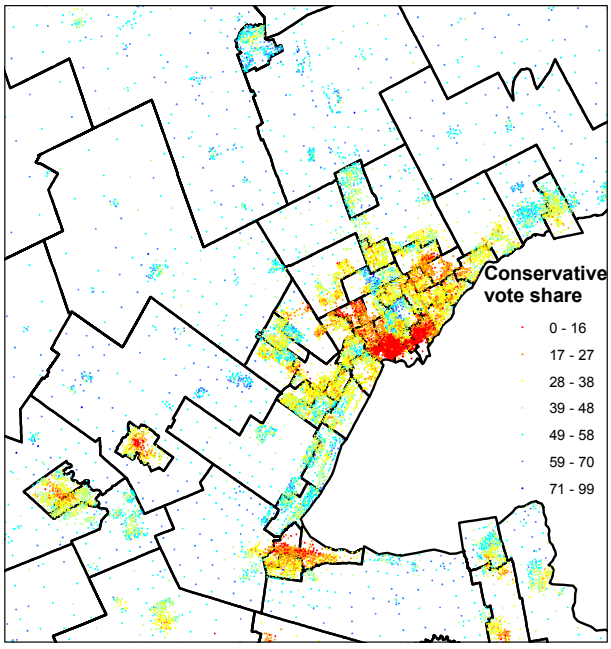
Figure 4.4 displays once again the vote share of the Conservative Party of Canada as a function of the distance from the Toronto city center.

Figure 4.4: Conservative vote share and distance from Toronto city center



Recall that beyond Toronto itself, each of the "stalagtites" of heavy voting for the NDP or Liberals corresponds to another dense industrial agglomeration in Southern Ontario. Consider a districting procedure in which one randomly selects one of the dots in Figure 4.4 and begins constructing parliamentary constituencies by progressively selecting nearest neighbors, continuing until reaching around 200 polling districts (the average for a Southern Ontario federal riding), then starting again. When employing this process, it is difficult to avoid coming up with a plan that generates overwhelmingly leftist districts near the city centers of Toronto, Ottawa, Hamilton, Guelph, London, Sudbury, and Windsor. When building districts in one of the stalagtites, all of the nearest neighbors are overwhelmingly leftist. Moreover, when building districts around observations near the top of the graph, nearest neighbors tend to be moderate and heterogeneous, and this approach tends to create suburban districts that are heterogeneous but with comfortable Conservative majorities. Rural districts in Southern Ontario tend to produce large Conservative majorities, but these majorities are nowhere near as large as those for the left in the urban core. In order to avoid extreme concentration of leftists, again, it would be necessary to avoid choosing nearest neighbors, and intentionally aim for wedge-shaped districts radiating out from the city center.

Figure 4.5: Federal Parliamentary Ridings in Southern Ontario



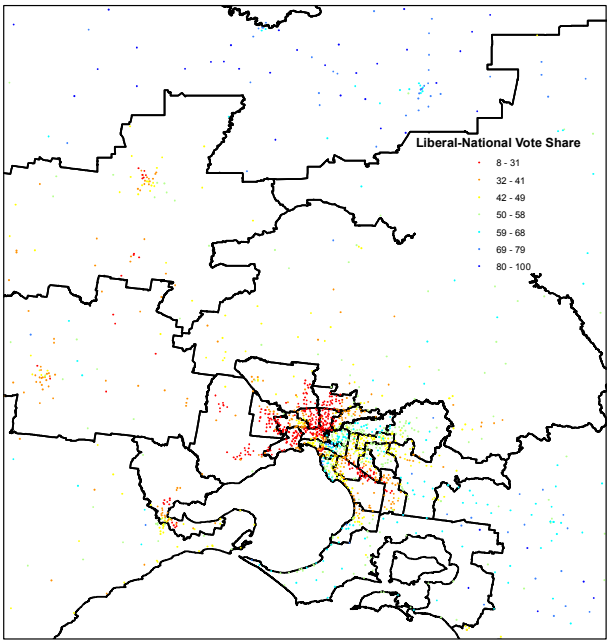
Of course the Federal Boundaries Commission for Ontario does not randomly generate compact districts through an automated process, nor does it intentionally create wedges. Figure 4.5 displays the most recent federal electoral boundaries, superimposed on federal election results at the level of the polling division (now displayed as points rather than polygons), for a segment of Southern Ontario. We see that by generating relatively compact districts, the commission has pulled together the most intensely left-wing neighborhoods in downtown Toronto, Hamilton, Guelph, and Kitchener, and generated some extremely lopsided districts: as many as 7 in Toronto alone. This pattern can be seen in virtually all of Canada's cities.[2]

In Australia as well, the electoral districts boundary commissions are faced with a similar situation: when drawing compact and contiguous districts, it is difficult to avoid drawing extremely lopsided Labor districts in urban neighborhoods. Figure 4.6 displays the 2007 boundaries for metro Melbourne. As in Toronto, it would be necessary to work very hard at drawing non-compact, long wedges to avoid generating several landslide Labor districts, but in practice, the boundary commission has generated a relatively compact plan that produces overwhelmingly pro-Labor urban districts and more heterogeneous but majority Liberal suburban districts. The

[2]Saskatchewan is an interesting exception. The most recent districting plan divides the city centers of both Regina and Saskatoon into four quadrants that extend out into the suburban and rural periphery, making the districts far more heterogeneous than if the city boundaries had been viewed by the districting commission as inviolate.

same pattern can be found in virtually all of Australia's cities (See Johnston and Hughes 1978).

Figure 4.6: Australian House of Representatives, 2007 Electoral Divisions



In the United Kingdom as well, the Boundary commissions for England, Scotland, and Wales operate with rules that mitigate against generating politically heterogeneous urban districts. Above all, the Boundary Commissions are required by law to take account of local government boundaries, and whenever altering constituencies, the Commissions must attempt to minimize the inconveniences that would come from breaking up local communities and neighborhoods.

The United States

Redistricting in the United States, of course, is a different enterprise altogether. One might argue that the districting process in the United States bears little resemblance to that of Canada or Australia, or to the proximity-based algorithm described above. Ever since Elbridge Gerry, the United States has been famous for extremely non-compact districts that were drawn by politicians to further their own careers or partisan agendas, and more recently, for its oddly-shaped majority-minority districts in the South. This is all true, but as we saw in the previous chapter, the underlying concentration of Democrats in cities is overwhelming, and it would take some rather clever gerrymandering on the part of Democrats to avoid racking up huge numbers of surplus votes in

cities.

There are few reasons to expect that the Democrats are capable of pulling this off. An emerging theme in this book is that leftist parties experience a tension between the interests of the party as a whole, which could benefit from breaking up urban bailiwicks, and a large group of powerful urban incumbents who are loath to compete for votes in unfamiliar and more competitive suburban environments. American political parties— the Democrats in particular— are not known for strong leadership and unity of purpose, and indeed, Democratic leaders in industrialized states who take on powerful urban incumbents in attempts to spread votes more evenly across constituencies frequently meet with failure (Butler and Cain 1992). In any case, because of the ubiquity of divided government in the U.S. states, it is relatively rare for the Democrats to have unfettered control over the redistricting process, and even when they do, they are constrained by a powerful combination of indignant urban incumbents and, in industrialized states with majority-minority cities, the dictates of the Voting Rights Act.

Figure 4.7: Bush 2000 vote share and distance from New York City center

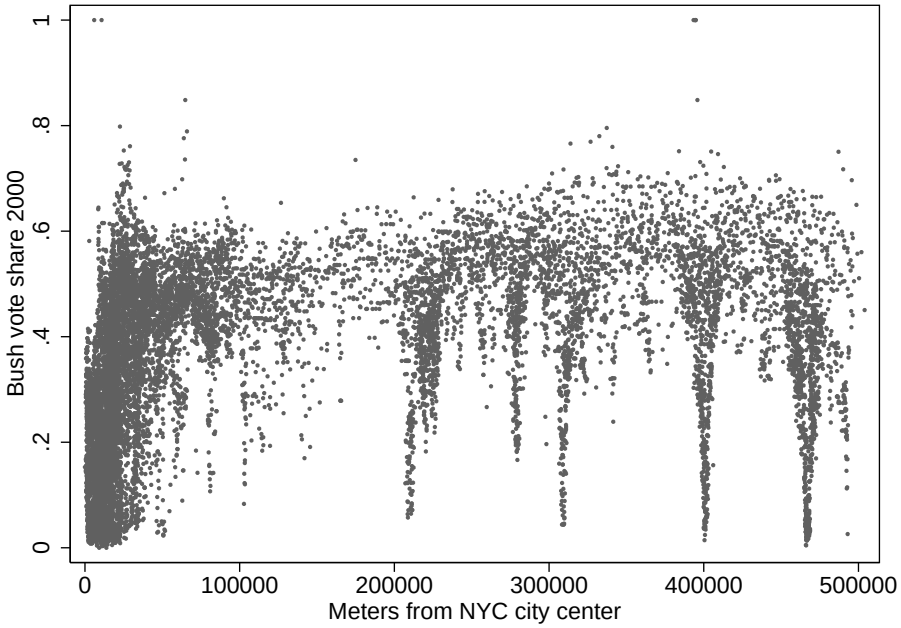
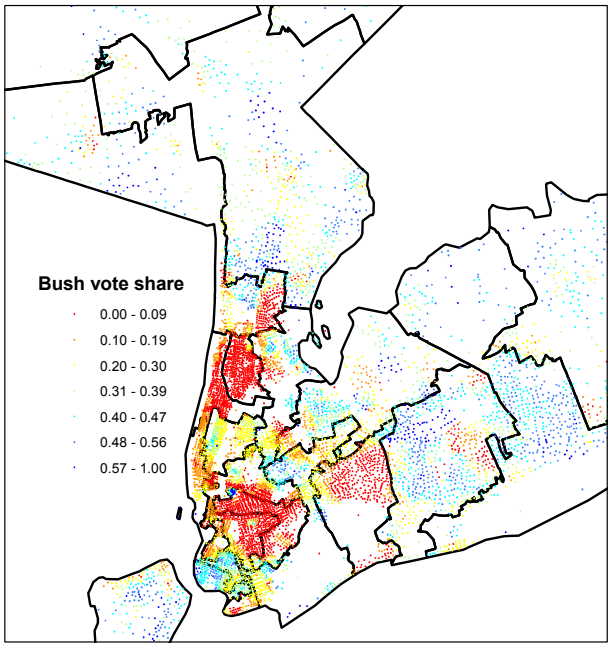


Figure 4.7 displays the 2000 Bush vote share in New York state as a function of each precinct's distance from the center of New York city. Not only New York City, but all of the other other industrial agglomerations of New York state, such as Syracuse, Rochester, and at the far right, Buffalo, display the same stalagtite shape, with an extremely Democratic urban core and a gradual transition to moderately Republican voting in the rural periphery. Especially in the New York City metropolitan region, it is difficult to imagine how one might draw

districts that are not overwhelmingly Democratic.

Figure 4.8 displays precinct-level Bush vote shares as points, and superimposes the boundaries of the Congressional districts. It is important to note that the colors of the dots are centered on New York state, for which the mean Bush share was quite low, so the range of the darkest blue dots begins at 57 percent, and the darkest red dots are in the range from zero to 9 percent. The map makes it clear that as in Toronto, it would be quite difficult do come up with a districting plan in New York city that did not produce a very large number of homogeneous, intensely Democratic districts, and indeed, the existing districting plan does so. The same is true for all of the other large cities in the United States.

Figure 4.8: Bush 2000 vote share, U.S. Congressional district boundaries



4.2.5 On the size of cities and districts

In some respects the examples of Toronto and New York are extreme. The leftist core of both cities is quite large relative to the number of Parliamentary or Congressional districts that must be drawn. For instance, the population of New York is 8.4 million, while the average Congressional district contains a population of around 650,000. Toronto contains around 2.5 million people, and an average Parliamentary Riding only contains 100,000 people. Thus when one applies a proximity-based automated districting algorithm, one is very likely

to generate a number of dominant leftist districts.

But what about the smaller stalagtites in the graphs above? Applying a proximity-based algorithm like the one above, the likelihood of drawing an overwhelmingly leftist district goes down if the size of the leftist core is smaller relative to the number of districts that must be drawn. Going back to the abstract example above, one discovers that if the peninsular metropolis must be divided into only two districts rather than five, most plans will lead to each party receiving one seat. This is because the urban core must end up being joined with some more moderate suburban precincts, and thus the problem of surplus votes disappears.

Moving to the real world, the population of the city of Columbus, Ohio is roughly the same as the average population of a Congressional district. Thus in contrast to New York or even Cleveland, it is not at all necessary that a predominantly "Columbus" district be drawn. And in fact, there is no Columbus district. The Olentangy River that bisects the city is used as a Congressional boundary, and both sides are joined with the surrounding suburban and rural periphery in order to create two heterogeneous districts in which the conservative suburban and rural hinterland are roughly balanced with the left-wing urban core.[3]

This example shows that in fact, as city size gets smaller with district size held constant, the problem of electoral geography for the left reverses. Rather than worrying about having too many of its voters crammed into urban districts, in smaller agglomerations the left must worry about having its dense bailiwicks overwhelmed by the suburban and rural periphery. As described in the previous chapter, a number of bastions of left-wing support, from New Zealand to Canada and the United States, are relatively small but dense agglomerations located along 19th century rail lines, river valleys, coastlines, or following along seams of minerals. Such agglomerations are often not large enough to dominate an electoral district, and too far from one another to link together.

This is less problematic for the left in Canada, Australia, and the United Kingdom, where districts are quite small relative to the size of industrial agglomerations, and the laws and norms governing the districting process mitigate against subdividing such communities. In Canada, a city of 100,000 like Guelph or St. Catherines will have its own district, and as we have seen, it will likely be overwhelmingly leftist. However, such cities pose a different kind of challenge for Democratic cartographers in the United States, where Congressional districts are far larger than in any other industrialized country. For example, many of the smaller, intensely Democratic Pennsylvania agglomerations discussed in the previous chapter, like Allentown and Scranton-Wilkes-Barre, are positioned in relatively comfortable Republican Congressional districts. The same is true of many of the

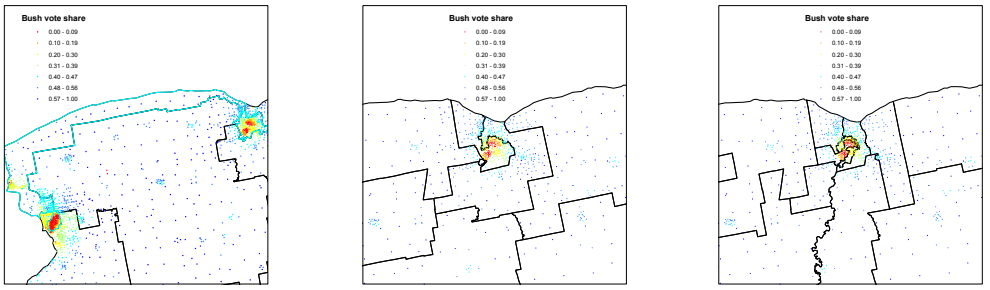
[3]Given the usual pattern of lower urban turnout, this has been an effective (though somewhat tenuous) gerrymander for Ohio Republicans, for the most part denying the Democrats any seats in central Ohio. These districts generally provide relatively narrow victories for Republicans, though they briefly lost one of the seats in 2008, then regained it in 2010.

smaller railroad, river, or canal agglomerations of the industrial Midwest (e.g. Bryan or Lima, Ohio; Springfield or Quincy, Illinois; Kalamazoo, Grand Rapids, or Battle Creek, Michigan).

This particular problem gets less severe for Democrats in state legislatures, where district size tends to be smaller. Even for a seasoned Republican cartographer, it would be difficult to avoid drawing a Democratic Assembly district or two in Buffalo, or a Democratic Michigan lower-chamber district in Grand Rapids, Battle Creek, or Kalamazoo.

This class of issues is on stark display in upstate New York, where Democrats are extremely concentrated in urban centers. In the once-large but declining cities of Buffalo and Rochester, NY, populations are now well below 300,000. In the 2000 round of redistricting, fearing that neither agglomeration was sufficiently large to generate a Democratic district, and facing a need to consolidate as the state lost Congressional seats, the Democrats agreed to a deal that created a notorious non-compact and overwhelmingly Democratic district that combined Buffalo and Rochester with a thin strip of the Lake Ontario shoreline, known as "the earmuffs," for reasons that are clear in Figure 4.9 below.

The New York Senate districting plan was heavily influenced by Republicans. Rochester's core is sufficiently small relative to the size of New York Senate districts that Republican cartographers were able to connect the urban core with enough Republican periphery to generate an entirely Republican metro Rochester Senate delegation. In the state Assembly, where districts are smaller and the plan was influenced by Democrats, it was possible to create one rather safe Democratic urban district, and one more tenuous and oddly-shaped Democrat-leaning district that skirted around the first ring of Rochester suburbs.



(a) NY-28 Congressional District (b) Rochester Senate Districts (c) Rochester Assembly Districts

Figure 4.9: Districts in metro Rochester, NY

One lesson from upstate New York is that gerrymandering in the United States appears to be quite important, since the representation of Rochester in the State Assembly, the State Senate, and the United States Congress is apparently contingent on who controls the districting process and what strategies they employ. However, a

more subtle lesson is that the electoral geography of the industrial revolution, combined with the size of districts, places important constraints on the actors. Quite simply, the geographic concentration of Democrats makes the task of gerrymandering relatively easy for the Republicans. If districts are sufficiently large, as in the New York Senate, the Republicans can run the table in a rather heterogeneous region without drawing egregiously non-compact districts. On the other hand, the best case scenario for the Democrats, even when they control the districting process in the same metro area, is to draw some rather odd-shaped districts that still only yield one or two seats out of five.

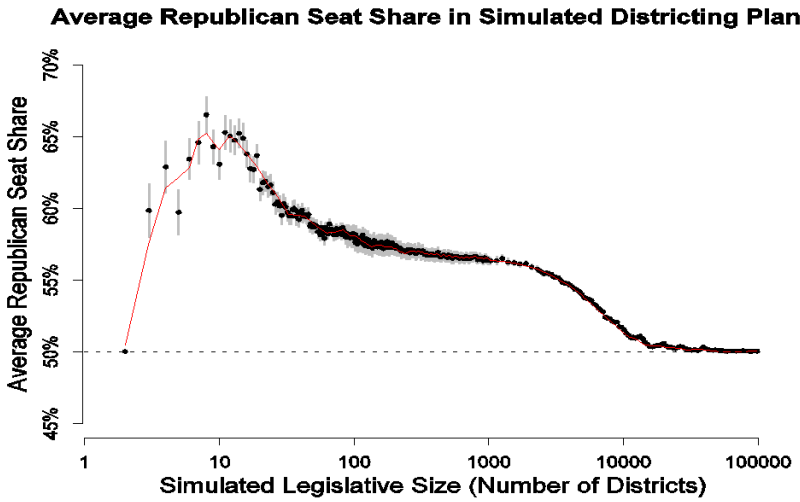
The art of "optimal" gerrymandering is complex and extremely contingent on local factors like the popularity of incumbents, migration, demographic change, etc., and the best gerrymander for a party depends entirely on how much electoral uncertainty one wishes to plan for. Even so, stepping back to see the larger picture, the geography of the industrial revolution, by placing Democrats in tight clusters of varying sizes and spreading Republicans rather evenly through the suburban and rural periphery, provides the Republicans a head start in the basic game of "packing" and "cracking." The most important reason for this is that Democrats are inexorably packed in the largest agglomerations—a problem that can only be overcome with extremely non-compact wedge-shaped districts that are rarely seen in practice. The same problem has plagued the left in Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and the UK.

But in the U.S. Congress and some state upper chambers, especially in the upper Midwest and Northeast, if there are a large number of small industrial agglomerations, college towns, or even rural county seats with unionized public employees, the Democrats can also experience a baseline disadvantage owing to the fact that their support is "naturally" cracked, with little effort required on the part of Republicans. In these settings, the Democrats must conjure up exceedingly odd-shaped districts in order to gain any hope of representation. For example, in Western Illinois, in 2001 the Democrats in the state legislature managed to draw a district—often touted as one of the ugliest in the country—that connected heavily Democratic but small and far-flung manufacturing towns along the Mississippi like the Quad Cities and Quincy, with railroad manufacturing hubs like Decatur, and Springfield. But in order to link these far-flung places, it was necessary to include a large number of rural Republican precincts, resulting in a rather unsafe Democratic district that was lost to the Republicans in the 2010 national Republican wave.

This discussion should make it clear that there is no universal size of legislature that is best for the left. This is highly contingent on the nature of the industrialization process in a state, province, or country, and the mix of large versus small industrial agglomerations. One way to cut through the complexity is to apply an automated districting algorithm like the one described above, and using real-world geo-referenced precinct-level election

results, simulate a large number of districting plans for each of a range of hypothetical legislature sizes, and then assess the share of seats that would be won by the right or left under each plan. Chen and Rodden (2010) have done this for the state of Florida using 2000 precinct-level presidential election results. This is an especially useful case, since the statewide vote was notoriously tied, with the election outcome ultimately decided by the Supreme court. The expectation is that, due to the geographic clustering of Democrats, on average, the simulated legislatures would produce Republican majorities in spite of the tied statewide vote. The size of this majority can be understood as a measure of electoral bias that is produced purely by residential patterns as opposed to intentional partisan or racial gerrymandering.

Figure 4.10: Results of districting simulations using Florida 2000 presidential election results



The results of this exercise are summarized in Figure 4.10. The horizontal axis represents the number of simulated districts, and the vertical axis represents the share of seats obtained by Republicans in the simulations. The dots represent the average Republican seat share over hundreds of simulations at each hypothetical legislature size, and the bars represent the range of the results. As in the toy example above, for all the districting plans, each party would win one district if the state were divided into only two. However, the hypothetical districting plans dramatically favor the Republicans for legislatures of size 3, and the optimal size for Republicans appears to be around 8. The bias in favor of Republicans then begins to fall, though very gradually, for larger legislature

sizes.

The most important lesson from this exercise is that for all practical legislature sizes, including the observed sizes of the U.S. Congressional delegation and both chambers of the Florida legislature, the simulated compact, contiguous districting plans would produce Republican majorities on the order of 58 to 65 percent. In fact, this simulation exercise corresponds quite nicely with the real world. In spite of extremely tight presidential and statewide elections for U.S. Senator and Governor, both chambers of the Florida legislature, as well as the Florida Congressional delegation, are dominated by large Republican majorities.

In further work, Chen and Rodden have expanded this simulation approach to each of the 21 states examined in the previous chapter. The basic shape of the relationship between simulated legislative size and estimated pro-Republican bias is the same in almost all states, and most importantly, the estimated bias was markedly in favor of the Republicans. The only exceptions were the less industrialized states, like South Carolina and Mississippi, where Democrats are more efficiently distributed across rural areas.

4.2.6 The argument in a nutshell

The argument can now be succinctly summarized. The urban form created by the industrial revolution tends to create clusters of left and right voters such that when contiguous winner-take-all districts must be drawn, right voters are less geographically clustered, and hence more efficiently distributed in space than left voters. More formally, if k is the number of neighbors needed to create a district, the number of co-partisans among the k nearest neighbors of the average left voter exceeds that of the average right voter.

This expression of the argument lends itself to some simple spatial statistics based on election results at the level of polling places or block groups that are roughly similar in size. It is useful to calculate a local index of spatial autocorrelation for each unit, which provides an indication of the extent to which the voting behavior of a geographic area is correlated with that of its neighbors. There are a variety of ways of defining neighborhoods, including first- and second-order contiguity, nearest neighbors, and distance bands. We can then examine whether left-wing precincts are more geographically clustered than right-wing precincts by contrasting the average index of spatial autocorrelation for all right-wing (say a right party vote share above the 60th percentile value) with that for all left-wing (below the 40th percentile value) polling places. For recent elections in the United States, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand, regardless of the precise definition of neighborhood, this technique reveals an asymmetry whereby left-wing precincts are more likely to be surrounded by other left-wing districts than is the case for right-wing precincts.

When districts are small relative to the size of leftist clusters, left voters will tend to be inefficiently packed

into homogeneous districts, creating a large density of districts with comfortable but not overwhelming right-party majorities. When districts are large relative to the size of these clusters, a second-order problem for the left can arise as well, in which dense leftist clusters tend to be overwhelmed by their right-leaning surroundings, adding further to the large number of districts with moderate but not overwhelming right-party majorities. In the presence of asymmetric clustering, barring the possibility of extremely small districts not much larger than a few city blocks, the best scenario for the left is to have extremely large districts that encompass entire metropolitan regions and their rural peripheries, such as U.S. Senate districts.

4.2.7 Scope conditions

The argument is by no means deterministic or universal. It is based on a geographic pattern that is most pronounced in places that experienced significant industrialization in the 19th and 20th centuries. Moreover, it assumes that the polity to be districted consists of a mix of urban, suburban, and rural districts. The argument may not have much force in a jurisdiction that is almost completely urban, or almost completely rural, or in settings where industrialization developed without a good deal of geographic concentration.

Moreover, various cities have their unique features and quirks. Haussmann tore down and rebuilt Paris, and in general, French political geography is still very much a product of cleavages owing to the French Revolution. Some wealthy neighborhoods in Scandinavian or Spanish city centers are wealthy bastions of support for the Conservatives, and have been for 200 years. Miami demonstrates a very dense and homogeneous swath of Republican voting in little Havana. Sometimes very homogeneous areas of right-wing domination create levels of spatial association for the right that rival those of the urban left, as in parts of rural Australia. Sometimes there are pockets of deep-rooted rural left voting, as in Northern Ontario, Western Canada, Western Massachusetts, and Tuscany's "red belt."

In spite of these quirks and wrinkles, the basic pattern described above is quite pronounced in a wide variety of contexts, and the rest of this book is based on the proposition that on average in industrialized polities, leftists tend to be inefficiently distributed across districts.

4.3 The Geography of Partisanship: The Big Picture

Let us now turn from hypothetical cities and simulated legislatures to the results of real elections contested in actual electoral districts over a long period of time. The arguments presented thus far lead to some clear expectations. Above all, we should expect to see a pronounced skew in the distribution of support across

districts, such that leftists are concentrated in a long tail of the inter-district distribution, and there is a large density of districts where the party of the right can expect a comfortable but not overwhelming majority. The following chapters will go into much greater detail about individual countries and elections, but before zooming in, it is useful to begin with a bird's eye view of the phenomenon.

4.3.1 Party Platforms

Before examining the inter-district distribution of partisanship in each country, we must know what we are looking at. Outside the United States, the ideological issue space—especially on the left—has been divided among multiple parties. In order to produce a map of the partisan landscape, it is useful to borrow from the two primary techniques used by political scientists to locate the platforms of political parties across countries.

First, they simply survey a number of "experts" with knowledge of each political system, asking them to place the parties' platforms on numerical scales from left to right. Such studies usually focus on a particular snapshot of platforms for one election or brief time period (Laver and Hunt XX, Castles and Mair XX, BDW XX, Huber and Inglehart XX). The best and most current source of expert survey data was collected by Benoit and Laver (2006), who assemble information on platforms along a large number of issue dimensions for the late 1990s and early 2000s. Of particular interest are their placements on economic issues (whether parties promote raising taxes to increase public services or cutting services to cut taxes), social issues (liberal versus conservative issues on matters such as abortion, homosexuality, and euthanasia), and a catch-all left-right assessment.

Another technique has been developed by the Comparative Manifestos Project, which employs teams of research assistants to count the number of phrases in party platform documents according to whether positions are taken in favor of or against a range of various policies. While this approach has some clear drawbacks (citations), it has the advantage that it allows for the possibility of meaningful time-series variation going all the way back to the early post-war period. For all of the policy areas identified in the Manifestos data set that have to do with traditional left-right policies such as economic redistribution, taxation, welfare expenditures, and efforts to reduce economic inequality (17 categories in all), I have taken the difference between positive and negative mentions, and then conducted factor analysis on those values for the entire data set, giving each party a factor score.

I then standardize this score, along with the Benoit-Laver placements described above, so that each has a mean of zero and standard deviation of one. These data can then be used to generate a simple visualization of estimated party platforms in Figure 4.11. The first three lines are the Benoit-Laver expert survey placements that correspond to recent elections. The bottom line is not directly comparable with the top three: it is meant

to give a much longer historical perspective by plotting the average of the yearly Manifesto-based scores over every election from World War II to the present.

Chapter 6 will delve into much greater detail, exploring time series variation as well as introducing all of the smaller parties that have come and gone in the postwar period in these countries. For now, we are interested in understanding the big picture of party competition in these countries, and thus focus on parties that have consistently received more than 5 percent of the vote for more than three consecutive elections. In each case it is possible to designate a "mainstream" party of the left, which appears as a red square, as well as a mainstream party of the right, which appears as a blue dot.

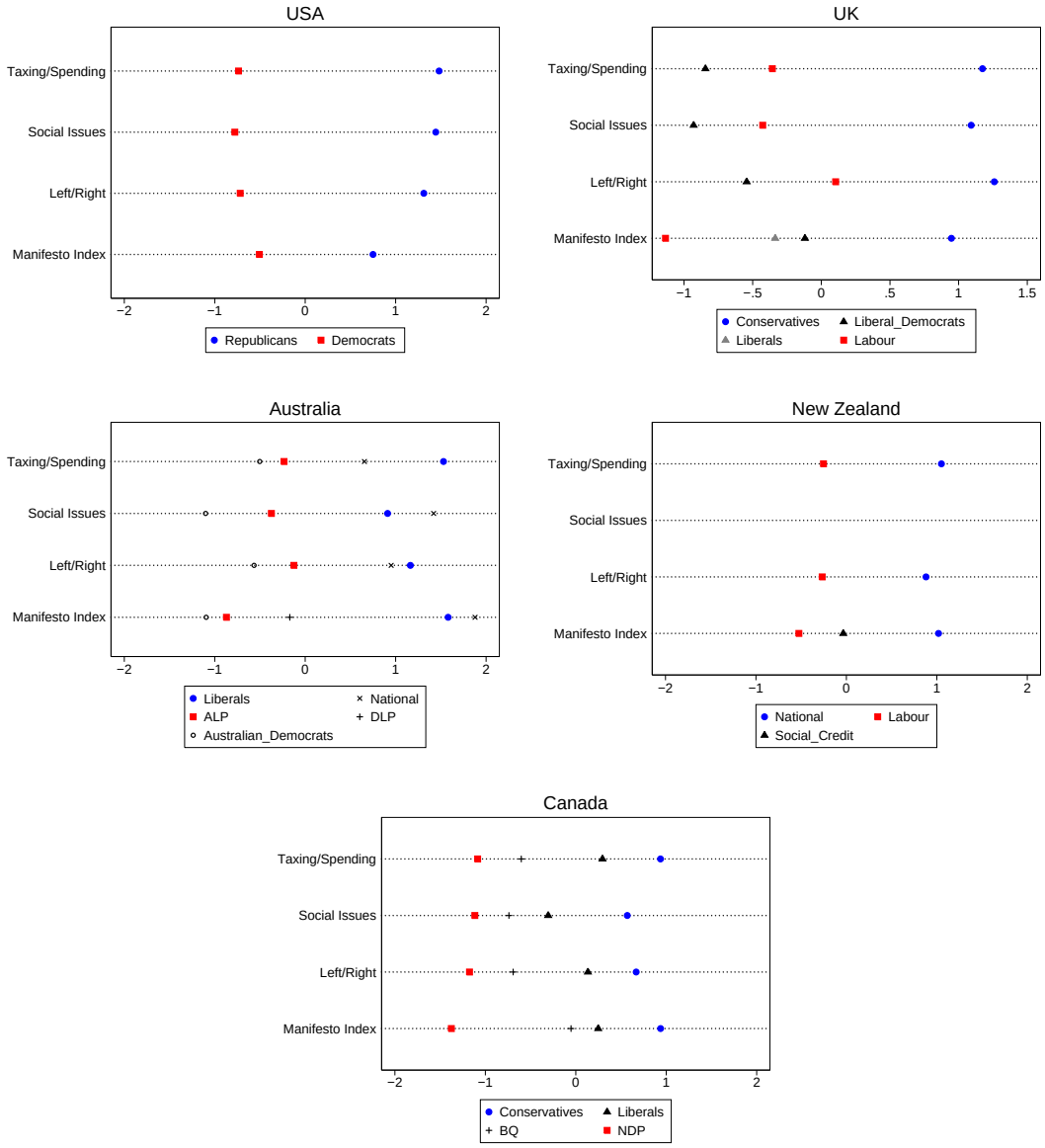


Figure 4.11: Estimated Party Positions

While the United States is simple, there are a variety of additional players that are long-term fixtures in the party landscape elsewhere. As described in Chapter 2, Labour supplanted the Liberals as the dominant party of the left in the UK after World War I. The Liberals have casted about for a winning strategy ever since, but for much of the post-war period, they have placed themselves in the center of the political spectrum, though generally closer to Labour than the Conservatives. This can be visualized in the bottom line of the first panel of Figure 4.11. Since merging with the Social Democrats, the Liberal Democrats are now in more direct competition with Labour, and according to the expert surveys, were actually positioned slightly to the left of

Labour in the early 2000s (see the top three lines in Figure 4.11).

In Australia, Labor has been the dominant party of the left since Confederation, though they faced a persistent threat from the Democratic Labor Party on the center-left until 1978, and more recently, from the Australian Democrats (and now also the Greens) to their left. The right has experienced a persistent split between the Liberals and National, though it is much different in kind than the splits on the left. The Liberals carry the banner of the right in urban and suburban districts, and National does so in the rural districts. Unlike the rivals on the left, they have segmented the political marketplace and do not run candidates that compete against one another. The expert survey placements are in keeping with common perceptions that National, with its low-income agricultural support base, is slightly to the left of the Liberals on issues of taxation and expenditures, but slightly to their right on social issues.

Until recently, New Zealand came closest to the United States in the purity of its two-party political competition between National and Labour. However, as demonstrated in the last line in the New Zealand graph in Figure 4.11, Social Credit was a persistent centrist part of the landscape from the early 1950s until the end of the 1980s. There was a fascinating multiplication of political parties in New Zealand in the 1990s, but this story will have to wait until Chapter 6.

If one follows Australian convention and views the Liberal-National coalition as a single player, it is reasonable to view the right as having one clear, dominant party in each of these countries. Canada is the exception. The NDP is clearly the party of the left, but the Liberals have placed themselves squarely in the middle of the political spectrum, with the Conservatives on the right.[4] One might view the Liberals as the mainstream party of the left, with the NDP as a far-left challenger. However, Figure 4.11 suggests that it is just as reasonable to view the Conservatives and Liberals as parties of the right and center-right (on economic issues), and the NDP as the "mainstream" party of the left.

4.3.2 The Distribution of Votes Across Districts

We are now ready to examine the long-run distribution of partisanship across districts in these countries. First, in order to give the horizontal axis a left-right interpretation, maintain consistency with previous graphs, and minimize the problem of splits on the left, let us begin by focusing primarily on the distribution of votes for the mainstream parties of the right: the Republicans in the United States, the Conservatives in the UK, the Liberal-National coalition in Australia, and the National Party in New Zealand. Leaving aside time series variation for later chapters, the figures below are based on pooled district-level data for every district in every election for

[4]The incursion of Reform and then the Canadian Alliance will be addressed below, as well as in Chapter 6.

which data were available since World War II.

Figure 4.12 displays a kernel density of the two-party vote share of the Republican candidate in post-war United States presidential elections (6,525 observations).[5]

Figure 4.12: Kernel Density of Republican presidential vote shares across U.S. Congressional Districts

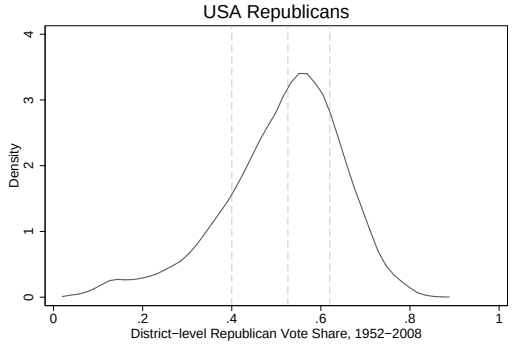


Figure 4.12 includes dashed lines demarcating the median district-level Republican vote share across all of these elections, as well as the 20th and 80th percentile values.[6] As anticipated, the distribution demonstrates a pronounced left skew. There is a large density of moderate districts just to the right of the median, and the Republican vote share in the 80th percentile district is quite close to that of the median district. On the other side, the left tail is pulled out such that the 20th percentile district is considerably further from the median. In other words, there are more moderately Republican districts than moderately Democratic districts. The peak of the distribution is a district with over 55 percent Republican voting. As demonstrated above, this large density of moderately Republican districts consists largely of the suburbs of major cities as well as heterogeneous "rural" districts that contain small 19th century railroad agglomerations.

Next, Figure 4.13 displays a highly left-skewed distribution of the Conservative vote share throughout the postwar period in Great Britain. Once again, there is a large density of moderately Conservative suburban districts to the immediate right of the median, and a much smaller number of moderate Labour districts. There is a large number of districts in the coalfields and 19th century manufacturing agglomerations that provide enormous majorities for Labour, and as with the Republicans, a very small number of districts that provide large majorities for the Conservatives.

[5] As will be discussed further in later chapters, owing largely to its presidential form of government, a problem with district-level results of Congressional elections in the United States is the relatively large importance of incumbency and other "personal" factors in legislative elections. High-quality candidates avoid running against popular or well-funded incumbents, and seats in ideologically moderate districts can end up with very lopsided results or go uncontested altogether. For this reason, vote shares in Congressional elections are almost meaningless for our purposes. Thus I follow the standard practice among American political scientists and use district-level presidential vote shares to measure district partisanship.

[6] I have been unable to assemble complete district-level 1964 presidential results, so this year has been dropped.

Figure 4.13: Kernel Density of Conservative Vote Shares, United Kingdom

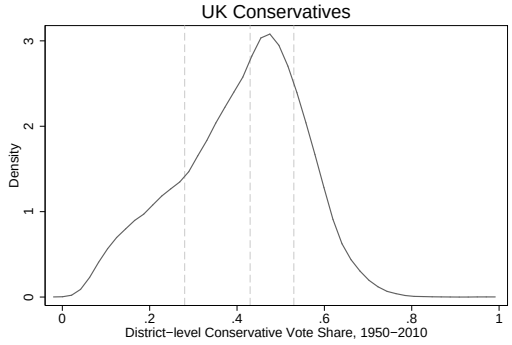


Figure 4.14: Kernel Density of Conservative Vote Shares, United Kingdom

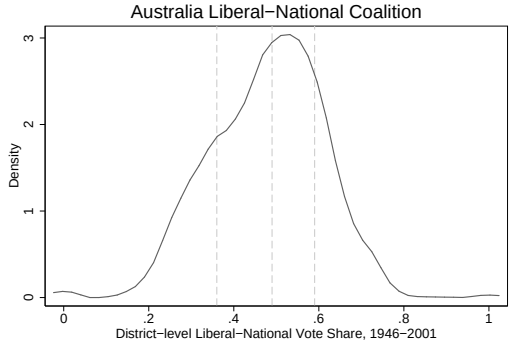
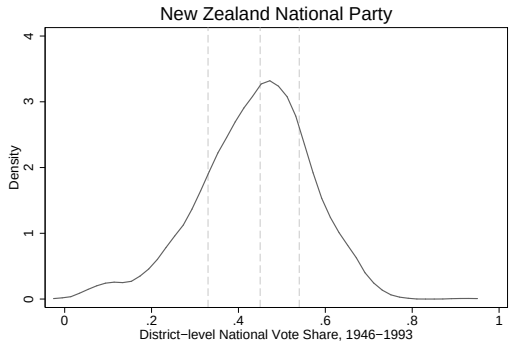


Figure 4.14 displays the vote shares of the Liberal-National Coalition over the post-war period.[7] Though there are fewer overwhelmingly Labor districts than in the UK, the basic story is the same. Over a long period of time, there is a relatively larger number of suburban districts that consistently provide modest victories for the Liberals than for the ALP. Though the National Party does win some very large majorities in rural areas, the ALP support base contains a larger number of such "landslide" districts in the districts with a legacy of early 20th century manufacturing.

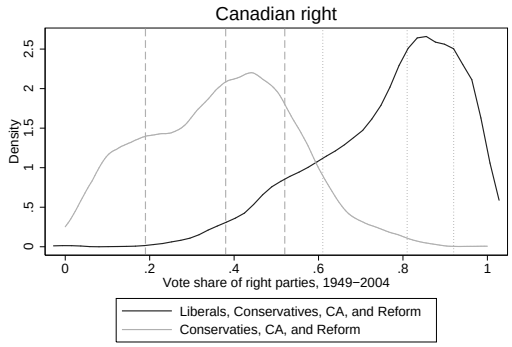
[7]In order to deal with the Australian system of preferential voting, I allocate first votes for minor parties of the right to the Liberal-National coalition. The left skew is even more pronounced if only first-preference votes for Liberal-National are considered. For a smaller subset of recent elections (1996 to 2008), I have obtained so-called "two-party preferred" vote shares from Ronald Johnston. The left skew is also slightly more pronounced if these data are used.

Figure 4.15: Kernel Density of National Party Vote Shares, New Zealand



The story is quite similar in Figure 4.15, which displays the distribution of National Party vote shares across districts from World War II until the introduction of proportional representation.

Figure 4.16: Kernel Density of Right Parties' Vote Shares, Canada



Finally, the discussion of party platforms in Canada suggests two possible ways of defining the left and right. Either the Progressive Conservatives (now called the Conservative Party of Canada) can be treated as the mainstream party of the right and the Liberals and NDP as the left, or if we take the experts survey and manifesto data at face value, the Liberals and Conservatives together can be viewed as the parties of the right and the NDP as the only true party of the left. An additional complication is that for a brief period in the late 1990s, Reform and then the Canadian Alliance challenged the Conservatives first in the West, and then throughout the country, before unifying with the remaining Progressive Conservatives in 2003. Thus it makes sense to add the votes for the Canadian Alliance and Reform for those years, though the the kernel densities in Figure 4.16, which cover the entire postwar period, look virtually identical if these parties or years are ignored altogether. Figure 4.16 displays the distributions of the combined vote shares of the right following both of these strategies, and both demonstrate a pronounced left skew. Either way, the 20th percentile district is further from the median than the

80th. Once again, there is a large density of suburban districts just to the right of the median, and fewer districts just to the left.

4.3.3 The Distribution of Party Ideology Across Districts

The kernel densities introduced above are simple and relatively easy to understand, but they do not paint a complete picture of the geographic concentration of the left. As we will see in later chapters, most individual elections demonstrate greater left skew than the distribution of pooled district-level results, and the distributions exhibit interesting changes over time.

Moreover, thus far we have attempted to impose a binary notion of partisanship in multi-party systems. By focusing on individual parties of the relatively unified right, we have not yet exploited the district-level data to their fullest. For instance, districts where the mainstream Conservative party does not perform well, it is useful to distinguish between a district that is dominated by the mainstream Labor party, and one in which that party has been squeezed out by insurgents like Greens, Australian Democrats, or Liberal Democrats. It may also be useful to distinguish between districts dominated by traditional conservative parties and those where small splinter parties are able to pick up some votes.

To produce Figure 4.17, I use the catch-all left-right scale from the Benoit-Laver expert survey and the complete district-level results of the corresponding election. The Benoit-Laver survey is very useful because it includes placements even for very small parties that only attract votes in a handful of districts. I simply multiply the standardized party placement by the party's vote share in each district, summing the products over all parties that received votes in the district to obtain a rough measure of district-level partisan ideology.

This approach has little value in the United States, where third parties have failed, but it is quite revealing in the Commonwealth countries. In the UK, this is a useful way of examining the distribution of partisanship, since the Liberal Democrats or the Scottish National Party either replace or split the vote with Labour in so many districts. In Australia, the graph is based on first preference votes, which often go to parties other than the ALP, National, and Liberals. Moreover, third parties performed quite well in the final SMD election in New Zealand in 1993, which took place on the same day as the referendum on electoral reform.

In each case, the inter-district distribution of partisan ideology demonstrates a left skew that is even more pronounced than in the analysis that focused only on the distribution of support for parties of the right.

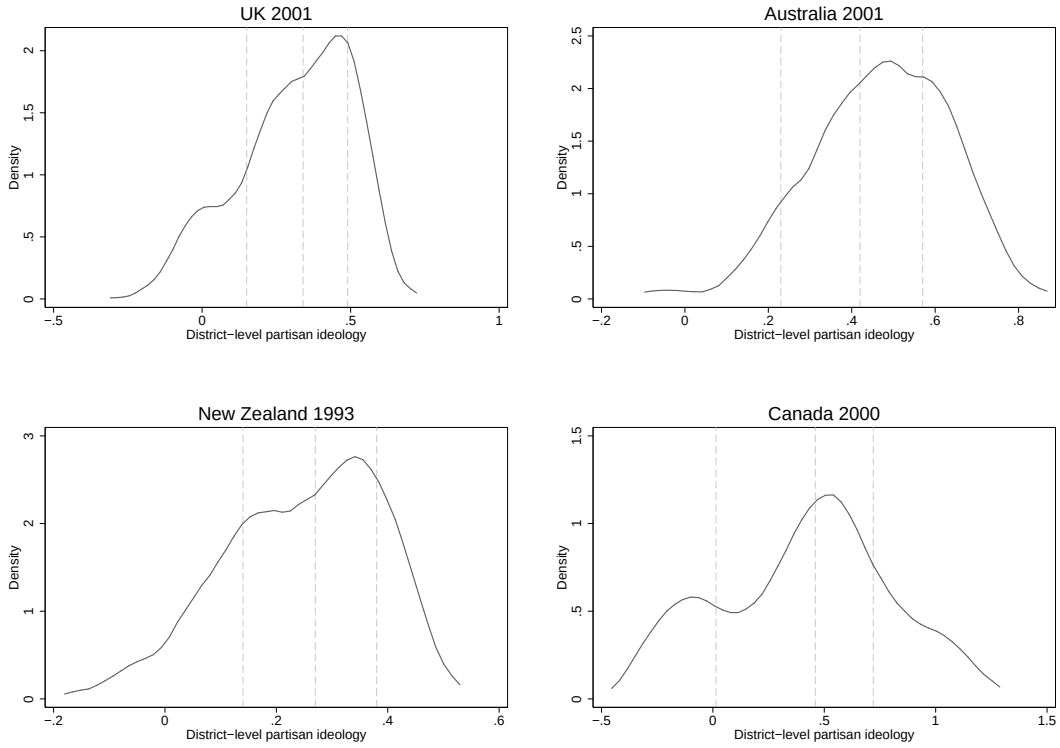


Figure 4.17: Distributions of District-Level Partisan Ideology

A disadvantage of this approach is that it relies heavily on the potentially somewhat arbitrary evaluations of experts about, for instance, the ideological distance between the platforms of Liberal Democrats and Labour on a single catch-all dimension. In addition, these graphs are based on a single election that may be idiosyncratic in some way. However, the graphs look very similar if drawn based on other ideological dimensions in the Benoit-Laver survey, or with the placements generated from manifestos. They also look similar if other elections from the late 1990s or early 2000s are used. The graphs also look similar if one uses data from earlier elections and draws upon either the manifesto placements or those from earlier expert surveys like Laver and Hunt (XX), Castles and Mair, or Huber and Inglehart (XX).

4.4 Looking Ahead

In the classic electoral geography literature, the study of electoral bias begins with an examination of the distribution of partisans across districts (Gudgin and Taylor (1974, 1979). In a two-party system, a persistent asymmetry in this distribution can be harmful for the party with the long right tail. Quite simply, too many of

its partisans are concentrated in districts that are won with overwhelming majorities, while its opponent enjoys a large density of districts where it can expect to win comfortable but relatively modest majorities. Building on some of the observations of Gudgin and Taylor (1974), Johnston (1976, 2002), Johnston, et al. (2001), Rydon (1957), and Erikson (year), this chapter has explained why this asymmetry tends to go in only one direction in industrialized societies.

The most obvious manifestation of this is an asymmetry in the transformation of votes to seats, such that the party of the right requires a smaller vote share than the left in order to form a legislative majority. We will see in later chapters that this is indeed the case in Commonwealth countries, but before delving into the analysis of seats and votes in various elections, some additional subtleties must be explored. The analysis thus far has been too simple. Above all, the partisanship of voters and the platforms of the parties who attempt to attract their votes have been viewed as fixed and exogenous. However, if there is an asymmetry in the distribution of political preferences across districts, some of the most interesting implications for politics have to do with platform choice and the entry of new political parties. Insights about platform choice and the threat of entry by new parties, in turn, must inform the analysis of electoral bias.

Chapter 5

Geography and Policy Bias

5.1 Introduction

Ever since the industrial revolution, leftist parties have contended with a skewed support distribution across districts. A key insight in the classic electoral geography literature is that this geography can cause the mainstream party of the left to obtain a lower seat share than the right with a similar share of the overall vote.

It is not immediately clear why this is important. In a majoritarian system, the winning party will always receive a larger seat share than its vote share. Electoral bias will generally only have an impact on the control of the legislature or formation of governments when the election is extremely close. Indeed, there are moments in majoritarian parliamentary systems when a party that finishes with fewer votes than its main competitor is able to form a government because it has won more seats. Siaroff (XX) has collected data on such cases over a large number of parliamentary elections in the 20th century. While he does not draw attention to it, his data reveal that among industrialized countries, the vast majority of instances have benefited the right. This is a rather striking fact, and it is surprising that it seems to have escaped attention in the academic literature.

Clearly, electoral bias gets academic and media attention in these moments. Two consecutive Labour losses in New Zealand with majorities of the popular vote in years 1978 and 1981 were eye-opening for many New Zealanders. A flurry of attention was given to potential systematic electoral bias in the U.S. Electoral College after the 2000 presidential election. When the "wrong" party forms a government, it offends democratic sensibilities.

Even still, these moments are relatively rare, and a large body of theory in political science would suggest that they are not as important as they may seem. If political parties adopt platforms that converge on the

preferences of the median voter and faithfully implement those platforms when in office, the profile of policies pursued by Labour or National, Democrats or Republicans, would be essentially the same. In some moments of cynicism, pundits buy into the Downsian notion that political parties are indistinguishable.

But political scientists know better. From a variety of sources, including surveys of candidates (Burden XX, Ansolabehere et al. XX, Norris XX), the expert surveys introduced in the previous chapter, and the content analysis of manifestos (Budge et al. XX), it appears that there is non-trivial divergence between the platforms of parties. Moreover, there is evidence that different parties behave differently when in office (citations).

Thus at a minimum, it can indeed be consequential if a party that loses the popular vote wins office once every couple of decades. Yet this chapter provides reasons to believe that the geography of political preferences that emerged from the industrial revolution is even more consequential than that. Following the classical electoral geography literature, the previous chapter viewed partisanship as essentially binary and exogenous, and asked questions about the implications of different geographic patterns of partisanship. We have taken this approach as far as it can go.

The task of this chapter is to build on a framework that was introduced in chapter 2, viewing individuals as possessing preferences on some issue dimension(s), and parties as offering competing platforms on those issues, paying close attention to how parties select their platforms in a system with heterogeneous winner-take-all districts. It examines the possibility that the skewed distributions of partisanship uncovered in previous chapters actually capture a left skew in the underlying distribution of political preferences across districts.

A left skew in the distribution of preferences across districts is more interesting and consequential than a left skew in the distribution of some binary notion of partisanship. This chapter will argue that if the distribution of district median preferences demonstrates a sufficiently long left tail, a number of interesting things happen.

First, we begin to understand the tensions that arise within, and possibly between, leftist parties if they must compete in a system where their core urban, mining and seaport districts are ideologically further from the national median than are the core rural districts of the right. Returning to a theme from chapter two, if we consider a model that allows for the entry of new parties or the fragmentation of old ones, it appears that relative to parties of the right, parties of the left should have a more difficult time finding a platform that allows them to fend off new challengers.

If we view parties as groups of self-interested individuals rather than unitary actors, it becomes clear that under very realistic conditions, if the left party does stay together, the platform can be easily "hijacked" by the urban extremists in such a way that makes the party unappealing in the pivotal districts around the median.

Above all, the central lesson of this chapter is that if the skew in district-level median preferences is suffi-

ciently large, the median voter in the median district might be to the right of the median voter in the country as a whole. The chapter will work through some competing models of how parties set their platforms in this setting, and all of them generate the expectation that policies will be pushed to the right of where they would be if the entire country was a single district.

The first task of the chapter is to establish some theoretical tools for understanding platform choice in a system with winner-take-all electoral districts, and then apply these to a setting where there is an asymmetric distribution of district-level preferences. The next task is to introduce some variations in these models that might allow us to apply them in both parliamentary and presidential democracies. Finally, before moving to careful analysis of individual countries, the chapter concludes with some empirical attempts to assess the plausibility of the theoretical approach by characterizing the shape of the distribution of district-level political preferences in several countries.

5.2 Political competition with heterogeneous plurality districts

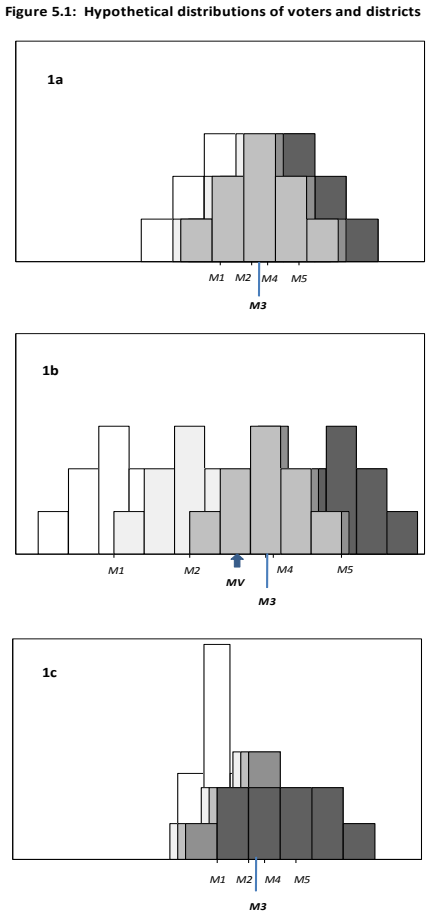
5.2.1 Symmetric distributions of district-level preferences

Beginning with Hinich and Ordeshook (1974), a handful of theory papers have attempted to move beyond the single-district framework of Hotelling (1929) in order to address the fact that at least in Britain and its former colonies, parties must set their platforms in a context of multiple, heterogeneous plurality districts.

Figure 5.1a displays the spatial distribution of preferences in a hypothetical society with five districts, where there is symmetric, unimodal distribution of preferences within each district, and a symmetric distribution of district medians. The medians of each district are marked with ticks on the horizontal axis. One of the first multi-district models was Hinich and Ordeshook (1974), which proves the analog of the famous single-district result: two competing parties converge to the ideal point of the median voter in the median district. In the symmetric example in Figure 5.1a, the median voter in the median district is identical to the median voter in the society.

Yet this type of model is somewhat unsatisfying, above all because we observe in practice that platforms do not converge, either at the district level or the national level (Ansolabhere, Snyder, and Stewart 2001). Building on the insight of Palfrey (1984), the parties might have to worry about entry by third parties in the extreme districts. Moreover, given the heterogeneity portrayed in Figure 5.1a, it seems likely that parties will face internal tension between different constituencies, and this tension might not always be resolved in a way that leads to the adoption of the seat-maximizing platform.

Figure 5.1: Hypothetical example



The first problem is taken up in Callendar's (2005) model that was first considered in chapter 2. Callendar considers a uniform distribution of districts like that displayed in Figure 5.1a, focusing on the competing needs of the two major national parties to appeal to moderates and win districts in the middle of the spectrum while deterring entry by third parties in the extreme districts. In Callander's model, a party only enters if it can win a district, so the entry-deterring equilibrium platform for the two parties in the Figure 5.1a example would be at the medians of the two extreme districts. This would stave off entry in the extreme districts while also barely avoiding the entry of a centrist party that adopts the median preference in the median district. Thus unlike Hinich and Ordeshook (1974), the platforms of the parties are quite far apart.

In Callander's model, party leaders are able to choose the most efficient platform for the party as a whole. This is not the case in Austen-Smith (1984), where national party platforms are aggregations of the policy positions of individual candidates, who care primarily about securing their own reelection, and where the mechanism through which party members' platforms are aggregated into party platforms might allow some individuals to be more influential than others. In a similar vein, Snyder (1994) Ansolabehere, Leblanc, and Snyder (2005) (henceforth ALS 2005) and Leblanc (2007) model national party platforms as emerging from a process of collective choice among the party's legislative incumbents.

A key feature of ALS (2005) is that it involves two periods, and the platforms in the second period are determined by the median of the legislative incumbents elected in the first period, but the outcome of the initial election is affected by some exogenous valence shock (e.g. economic crisis or war) that favors one party or the other. To understand the logic, consider Figure 5.1a once again. In the initial election, simply apply the logic of Hinich and Ordeshook (1974), and assume that the parties converge to the preference of the median voter in the median district (that of district 3), such that neither party has an advantage on the ideological dimension. But imagine that the party of the right benefits from a valence shock, allowing it to capture the normally indifferent voters right at the national median, which allows the party of the right to win districts 3, 4, and 5. In the second period, the party's platforms are chosen by majority rule among the incumbents, whose induced platform preferences are their district medians. Thus the platform of the R party is the median of district 4, and the platform of the L party is the average of the medians of districts 1 and 2. Thus as the parties approach the next election, the R party is slightly closer to the national median than the L party, whose self-interested incumbents set the platform in a way that undermines the party's chances in the next election. Because they are uncertain about future valence shocks, they cannot afford to allow the party platform to wander too far from their district medians.

This intuition seems to match up quite nicely with reality: when times are good for a party, its platform is influenced by moderate voices that it has been able to bring into the fold. When times are bad, it becomes extreme and experiences a time in the wilderness, and it must wait for some exogenous good fortune like an unpopular war or a recession to bring moderates back into the party.

5.2.2 Asymmetric distributions of district-level preferences

Ever since Kendall and Stuart (1950), for whom a normal distribution of district-level partisanship was presented as a kind of natural law of political geography, much of the literature considering the distribution of partisans across districts begins and ends with a symmetric, unimodal distribution. But let us now consider the

possibility, inspired by earlier chapters, that the distribution of district-level preferences is left skewed. By considering asymmetric distributions of cardinal district-level preferences (as opposed to the binary partisanship of the previous chapter) in spatial models with endogenous platform choice, it is possible to derive normative implications beyond electoral bias. Consider the distribution of preferences depicted in Figure 5.1b. Districts 3 and 4 are unchanged, but districts 2 and 5 have been pulled away from the median district, and district 1 has been pulled even further. While each district contains a symmetric distribution of voters, the distribution of district medians now demonstrates a left skew.

Immediately, one can draw a striking implication from Hinich and Ordeshook (1974). If the parties converge on the ideal point of the median voter in the median district and transform it directly into policy, the policy profile will veer substantially to the right of that preferred by the national median voter (see also Leblanc 2007). By creating winner-take-all districts with a sufficiently skewed distribution of district medians, a society can create policy bias, such that plurality elections with a single national district, or elections using proportional representation, would yield different equilibrium policies.

The logic of Callander (2005) also has interesting implications for countries with skewed distributions of district medians. In Figure 5. 1a, if the party of the left attempted to move to the median of district 1 in order to stave off entry of a far-left party, it would not only have dim hopes of winning a two-party contest with the party of the right, it would be open to entry by a center-left party. The optimal strategy of the party of the left is thus to cede district 1 to an entrant and focus on competing in districts 2, 3, and 4. In fact, this is exactly what the Liberals seem to have been hoping for in Great Britain at the end of World War I. Apparently they believed that they could maintain their dominance of the center-left and cede only the most homogeneous working-class districts to Labour. In retrospect, they were wrong. Labour was able to squeeze them out and dominate most of the districts to the left of the median. In the next chapter, I will argue that Canada represents the kind of equilibrium the British Liberals were hoping for. They allowed the NDP to carve out a niche in the left tail of the distribution, but they managed to compete very successfully by adopting a centrist platform, aided substantially by the utter collapse of the Conservatives in Quebec.

Ansolabehere et al. (2005) and Leblanc (2007) focus more directly on the possibility of an asymmetric distribution of district-level medians than others in the literature. Consider once again a starting point in the first election where the parties converge on the median of district 3. In the case of a small valence shock favoring the right, the platform of the R party in the next period would be the rather moderate median of district 4, but the L party would be stuck with the very extreme midpoint between the medians of districts 1 and 2. In this way, a party can suffer from a structural disadvantage such that it easily falls into a long-term electoral slump because

its platforms are too extreme for voters in the pivotal districts, threatening to make it a "permanent minority." In this case, the structural advantage of the R party would introduce policy bias if it faithfully implements the median of district 4, which is even further from the national median voter than the district 3 median that is favored in the simpler Hinich and Ordeshook model.

In short, an asymmetric distribution of district-level ideal points can bring not only systematic bias in the transformation of votes to seats, but also in the transformation of preferences to policies.

5.2.3 Variations in party discipline

Is it really conceivable that political geography can cause a party to get stuck with an extreme position and lose well under 50 percent of elections over a relatively long period, as in Ansolabehere et al (2005)? Do parties really have to worry about entry? Americans might have good reasons for skepticism, but the next chapter will argue that the "long term minority" story arising from Ansolabehere et al. (2005) provides some useful insight into the persistent difficulties of Labor parties in Great Britain, Australia, and New Zealand in the early post-war period, when their supporters were highly concentrated in urban and mining districts. In fact, Iversen and Soskice (2006) document that left governments have been formed far more often under proportional representation than under plurality systems among OECD countries in the post-war period. A large part of the reason might lie in the platforms of the parties during this period, which were colored by the preferences of urban incumbents.

If there is a left-skewed distribution of district-level preferences in Ontario, the Callander (2005) model might indeed help explain why the Liberals maintain a centrist platform in order to compete against the right in the pivotal suburban districts while allowing the NDP a foothold in the left-wing industrial and extraction-oriented districts. And as the Callander model would predict, as "New Labour" has finally moved to the right in recent years in Great Britain in order to capture the pivotal suburban districts, it finds itself challenged from the left in some leftist districts by the reformulated platform of the Liberal Democrats. In the past, it appears that Labour prevented entry in the leftist districts while allowing the Liberals a foothold in the moderate districts.

While these models yield interesting insights in parliamentary systems, they seem to fall flat in the United States. For most of the last century, third party entry has not been a major concern of Congressional candidates. And while chapter 4 showed that the distribution of partisans across districts displayed a pronounced left skew, it was the Republicans who spent most of the post-war period in the wilderness. Indeed, the models above implicitly assume something like a Westminster-style parliamentary democracy. All of these models assume that the party imposes a single national platform that cannot be disavowed on the campaign trail by its members,

and they implicitly assume strict party-line voting in the legislature, which in turn assumes that party leaders have at their disposal some effective carrots and sticks, like the threat of a no-confidence vote (Diermeier and Feddersen 1998), or the ability to nominate candidates in the districts and dole out campaign funds (Mayhew 1974).

In the United States, the executive does not rely on the maintenance of a partisan majority in order to stay in office, and majority party leaders do not have the threat of no-confidence votes at their disposal. Moreover, since the rise of primaries, they have not been able to control nominations in the districts. This allows considerable latitude to candidates in the districts to break with the party leadership and bring their platforms closer to the district median. For example, Southern Democrats can credibly offer pro-gun and anti-abortion platforms, since their voters know that the Democrat leadership has no way of forcing them to vote for gun control or relaxed abortion restrictions. In turn, Democratic party leaders are unlikely to bring such legislation to the floor in the first place. Because of parliamentary institutions and disciplined parties, a candidate of a center-left party cannot credibly make such promises in places like Alberta.

As a result of this slack in the party labels in the United States, chapter 8 will show that in contrast to parliamentary systems, Democrats can compete quite effectively in "Republican" districts and vice-versa, sometimes even in the absence of an obvious national valence shock. Some unique aspects of this difference will be explored more carefully in Chapter 8. Above all, the implication of the left skew in preferences is not that the party of the "left" falls apart, or that it gets stuck with a far-left platform, but rather, that it has incentives not to develop a coherent platform at all. With this approach, it is able to form legislative majorities with surprising frequency. But relative to the Republicans, these Democratic majorities are composed of extremely diverse representatives who find it difficult to act cohesively.

5.2.4 An asymmetry in the vote-seat curve: A silver lining for the left?

If the starting point for Kendall and Stewart (XX) was indeed wrong, and the distribution of district-level median preferences exhibits a left skew, the approach of Ansolabehere et al (2005) carries an additional implication that has not been adequately explored in the literature. The vote-seat curve might not have the appearance of the typical "cube law" relationship that has been at the heart of electoral studies since Kendall and Stewart (several citations). I have already argued that when valence shocks are held at zero and the vote shares of the two parties are very close to 50 percent, the party of the left should receive less than 50 percent of the seats. But what if the party of the left benefits from a substantial positive valance shock? For example, what if the right party presides over a disastrous military conflict or a recession, or comes to be perceived as incapable of effective leadership?

How does that contrast with situations where the right is the beneficiary of such shocks of similar magnitude?

Figure 5.2: Hypothetical example

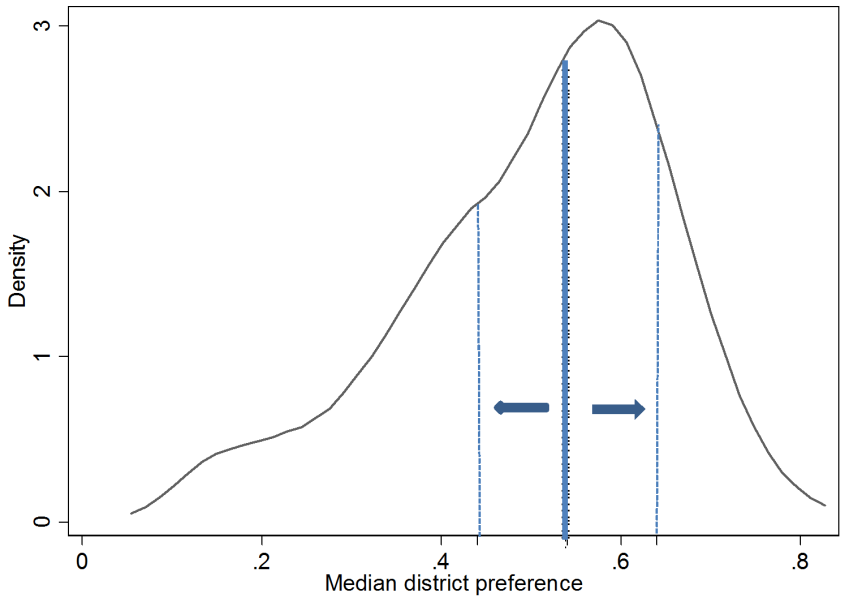


Figure 5.2b suggests an interesting asymmetry that arises from the distribution of district medians. The median of district 4 (let us think of it as a moderate suburban district) is ideologically very close to the median of the pivotal third district, while the median of the second district is further away. Likewise, the far right (rural) district is also closer to the median district than is the far-left (urban) district. This means that as long as the platform of the left-wing party has not wandered too far from the national median district, it can benefit more easily from a valence shock in its favor. In Figure 5.2b, consider a modest valence shock in favor of the left. Even a rather modest shock can allow the party of the left to win not only the pivotal third district, but the proximate fourth district as well, taking four out of five districts. A valence shock of similar size would help the party of the right win the median district and take control of the legislature, but it would not allow them to build a super-majority, because district 2 is ideologically further from the median. It would take a much larger

valence shock for the party of the right to win on the ideological turf of the left than vice-versa.

In other words, while it has a number of disadvantages, a skewed support distribution can insulate against complete obliteration during bad times and yield asymmetric gains during good times.

Figure 5.2 clarifies this further by presenting a continuous distribution of district medians across a large number of districts. The solid line represents the median preference in the median district. Let us imagine that the dotted lines represent the changing cut-points associated with a valence shock with a size that represents one standard deviation on the ideological scale. As the dotted line moves away from the median, one of the parties picks up seats in the ideological "turf" of the other party. The zone under the kernel density to the right of the median is larger than the zone to the left of the median. Thus the party of the left can make bigger seat gains during "good times," presumably with a similar increase in the vote share.

Thus the vote-seat curve might demonstrate an asymmetry whereby the "winner's bias" is larger for the left than the right. In the chapters to come, I will argue that this is what happened with the extraordinary Labour victory in Great Britain in 1997, and the extraordinary gains made by Democrats in the U.S. Congress in 2006 and 2008.

If this is correct, it helps explain why the underlying anti-left electoral bias associated with residential patterns can be difficult to see. Every so often, the left receives an asymmetric winner's bonus, creating the appearance that it benefits from electoral bias. Estimating electoral bias using aggregate data with a model in the spirit of Tufte (1973) could easily provide the wrong impression.

To complicate matters further, in a presidential system like the United States with flexible party labels and a high degree of personal voting, once they are swept into office on the coat-tails of a popular presidential candidate, it appears that incumbents are able to stick around for a very long time, even in districts where they have the "wrong" party label. The classic example is the Democratic class of 64 that swept into office in conservative districts, and maintained a strong presence in the legislature until the 1990s (Erikson XX).

5.3 Measuring district-level preferences

Before moving on to apply these arguments in country case studies, it is necessary to address an important empirical problem. The kernel densities of party voting presented in previous chapters do not necessarily tell us anything about the distribution of preferences. Moreover, indicators of electoral bias cannot be viewed as a proxy for policy bias. To see this, return to Figure 5.1 and examine panel c. In this example, districts 2, 3, and 4 are identical to the symmetric case displayed in Figure 5.1a. Moreover, districts 1 and 5 have the same

medians as in Figure 1a. Yet the left-wing (urban) district now has a tighter, more leptokurtic distribution, while the right-wing (rural) district has a more platykurtic distribution. This hypothetical example flows directly from some of the observations in chapter 3. It could be the case that the ideological preferences of the median voter in urban districts are not especially far from the national median, but these districts are merely more homogeneous in their preferences than rural districts. Whether one applies the platform-setting logic of Hinich and Ordeshook (1974), Callander (2005), or Ansolabehere et al. (2005), the party of the left would win district 1 with a larger majority than that with which the party of the right would win district 5, which would create electoral bias as normally defined. Yet since the district medians are symmetrically arranged around the median district, there is no reason to expect policy bias.

Confronted with a distribution of district-level partisanship like those displayed in the previous chapter, a crucial empirical question is whether the underlying distribution of preferences resembles Figure 5.1b or 5.1c, or perhaps some combination of the two. Yet ever since Miller and Stokes (1963), survey researchers have suffered from a lack of sufficient observations within individual electoral districts to reliably characterize district preferences. To get around this problem, some researchers have used demographic variables in order to generate proxies for district preferences (e.g. Pool, Abelson, and Popkin 1965) or simulate them (Ardoin and Garand 2003). Other scholars have used electoral returns (e.g. Kernell 2009). Levendusky, Pope, and Jackman (2008) use a Bayesian approach to estimate district-level partisanship that builds on the strengths of both approaches by combining election returns with district demographics and a variety of other factors.

Recently, scholars have been able to return once again to the survey-based approach of Miller and Stokes, taking advantage of surveys with much larger sample sizes obtained through random digit dialing such that there is a reasonable number of observations in each districts. They use self-identified ideology (Clinton 2008) or create scales out of multiple questions (Park, Gelman, and Bafumi 2004; Bafumi and Herron 2007; Peress 2008; Gelman et al. 2008) in order to characterize state- or district-level preferences.

Warshaw and Rodden (2009) attempt to build on the strengths of these previous studies. Using the rich set of policy questions and reasonably large samples within districts afforded by the 2004 Annenberg National Election Study, they employ a Bayesian IRT model to estimate individuals' latent preferences on two issue dimensions—one related to economics, and another related to moral values—and estimate a median for each district, using a Bayesian Hierarchical Model to address the problem of small sample sizes in some districts. This approach is a marriage of the survey and demographic approaches, and borrows from the strengths of each, so that information can be drawn from the entire distribution of district preferences to make inferences regarding the median of each district.

They find that the distributions of both economic and moral values medians across districts demonstrate a pronounced left skew, much like the distribution of presidential vote shares displayed in the previous chapter. In fact, the kernel density in Figure 5.2 above was not a made-up example. It is the distribution of district-level median preferences on the economic dimension estimated by Rodden and Warshaw (2009). A similar result is obtained for the one-dimensional partisanship estimates generated by Levendusky, Pope, and Jackman (2008). As in the example of Figure 5.1b above, Warshaw and Rodden's analysis suggests that the median voter on the economic dimension is slightly to the left of the median voter in the median district.

In a future draft, I will extend this type of analysis to other countries using various surveys. Although stratified sampling techniques in many surveys can make it difficult to draw inferences about the overall distribution of preferences across districts, there are other ways of examining the hyothesis that the distribution of district-level preferences has a long left tail. For instance, I have merged district-level election results with surveys, allowing me to characterize the average issue preference in districts that are dominated by left parties, those that are dominated by right parties, as well as the districts right around the median district. I can then test the hypothesis that the respondents in the left-most districts are further from the median district than are the respondents in the right-most districts.

5.4 Looking Ahead

The previous chapter culminated with some evidence that residential patterns generated by the industrial revolution created a skew in the distribution of partisans across districts, and this skew should generate persistent electoral bias. But this chapter provided reasons to believe that the traditional mechanistic approach to votes and seats does not adequately capture the political dynamics associated with these residential patterns. In the chapters that follow, we will explore these dynamics in greater detail.

Returning to the dilemma of electoral socialism from chapter 2, if the distribution of median district preferences demonstrates a left skew, this chapter generated the expectation of intense battles within leftist parties between the "purists" of the urban core and the "moderates" who hope to win pivotal suburban districts. When the purists in the left tail of the distribution are in the ascendency, we can expect electoral troubles for the left. When the moderates gain the upper hand, we might expect impressive victories accompanied by immediate disillusion and consternation among the urban left.

Alternatively, as in the early days of uneasy collaboration between liberals and socialists in the era of franchise expansion, the greater ideological heterogeneity on the left might be expressed as a split between

multiple leftist parties that must deal with district-level coordination problems. In addition to the well-known cases like the Liberal Democrats and Labour in Great Britain, or the NDP and Liberals in Canada, the next chapter will introduce the fascinating history of the antagonism and internal strife within the Labor parties in Australia and New Zealand, as well as between mainstream Labor parties and breakaway parties like the Democratic Labor Party in Australia.

The United States chapter will provide an interesting contrast. As in the Anglophone Westminster democracies, there is an identifiable group of districts in the left tail of the distribution, and these are the districts encompassing the neighborhoods of the industrial working class in the era of industrialization. As elsewhere, these districts do not constitute a majority, and they must seek out allies. But since there is no need for American parties to enforce a single national platform, they have formed some interesting alliances, including with segregationists, boll weevils, and most recently, blue dogs. These partners make it possible to form nominal legislative majorities, but often make it difficult to promulgate leftist policies.

Chapter 6

Leftist Parties in Westminster Systems

6.1 Introduction

This chapter will take a closer look at the implications of the arguments in the foregoing chapters for party competition in parliamentary democracies with winner-take-all districts. An important feature of parliamentary democracy is that because of the fusion of the executive and legislature and the centrality of the no-confidence procedure, political parties in parliamentary democracies tend to be cohesive and disciplined, such that it is difficult for candidates to credibly offer distinctive platforms in different districts. Parties must decide upon "one-size-fits-all" platforms for the entire country.

The previous chapter argued that if the distribution of preferences across districts demonstrates a left skew, platform selection should be more difficult for the left than for the right because of a battle between the "purists" who represent the interests of the urban industrial districts and the "opportunists" who wish to choose a moderate platform that will allow the left to win elections and form governments. For the right, on the other hand, straddling the smaller ideological gap between rural and suburban voters is easier.

This chapter traces out the ways in which this asymmetry has played itself out in the UK, Australia, New Zealand, and Canada. The ideological divide across districts on the left takes the form of either a war between factions within the mainstream leftist party, a split into competing parties, or both. If the mainstream part of the left adopts a centrist platform, it runs the risk of an internal split or a new entrant on its left flank. But on the other hand, if it allows itself to be captured by the urban purists, it will be unable to compete in the pivotal suburban districts, which could generate not only a long period in the wilderness, but also the prospect of a new competitor on the center-left.

This framework helps explain some of the struggles of Labor parties in each of these Commonwealth countries in the early Post-World War II decades. By holding fast to nationalization and other Socialist platforms, they won large majorities in urban districts with large populations of unionized workers, but fell short in suburban, town, and mixed districts. This also created space for moderate parties like the Liberals in the UK, the Democratic Labor Party in Australia, and Social Credit in New Zealand. As in 19th century Europe, these splits on the left once again created coordination problems that sometimes gave pluralities in left-majority districts to parties of the right, thus undermining leftist representation in the legislature.

In each of these countries, the end of the Cold War saw a pronounced shift in the platforms of these Labor parties. Suburban moderates gained the upper hand, and these parties were able to occupy the political center in a way that had previously been impossible. This created a rather sudden improvement in the efficiency of their geographic support distribution. However, the move toward "New Labor" has led to consternation in the districts of the left tail, and very recently, these parties have experienced intense internal battles as well as entry by new parties to their left, and in the case of the Liberal Democrats in Britain, a rather remarkable attempt of existing parties to regroup and outflank Labour to its left. In Canada, the split on the left has been a lasting feature of the party system throughout most of the 20th century.

This chapter will apply the same analytical framework to each country. Beginning with World War II, it will examine the interplay of several inter-related concepts: inter-regional party support distributions, election outcomes, changes in party platforms, entry by new parties, district-level coordination problems, and the transformation of votes to seats. While pointing out some interesting heterogeneity, these analytical narratives show some remarkable similarities.

After detailing some of the challenges facing leftist parties competing in winner-take-all districts in the shadow of the industrial revolution, each narrative will return to a question that has resurfaced on several occasions throughout the book. If the system is so detrimental, why don't leftist parties make electoral reform their first priority on the day they come to power? The question has two relatively straightforward answers that were foreshadowed in earlier chapters. The first is based on the notion that parties are cohesive teams, and the second on the notion that they are groups of self-interested individuals.

First, if one accepts the narrative of this chapter, the mainstream party of the left must always worry about losing votes to third parties in the center or on the left flank. Thus the introduction of a more permissive proportional system could be quite dangerous, allowing the third party the foothold it needs, and ruling out the possibility of forming a single-party government in the future. This is why ever since the early 20th century, the leaders of the mainstream leftist party become advocates of majoritarian rules as soon as they believe they have

won the coordination battle with their leftist rivals, even while suffering in the transformation of votes to seats. And of course this is why the insurgent rival, whether a party like the NDP or Greens on the left, or a party like the British Liberals in the center, puts proportional representation at the very top of its policy agenda.

Second, there is another problem with proportional representation for the mainstream party of the left. Its safe urban incumbents have often built up a great deal of power and influence within the party, and they are loath to agree to any electoral reform that threatens to undermine it.

6.2 Great Britain

6.2.1 The Geography of Support

Let us begin with the classic case examined by Gudgin and Taylor (1979), who pointed out that the distribution of partisanship in Great Britain had a skew in the immediate post-war period owing to the concentration of Labour support in the coalfields and industrial districts. While the kernel density in Chapter 4 aggregated over all elections since World War II, Figure 6.1 displays individual elections, once again focusing on the Conservatives as a way of circumventing the problem of a divided left. Indeed, the left skew was pronounced in the early post-war period, with the left tail consistently composed of the districts that encompass the industrial agglomerations and coalfields of the 19th century. There has always been a large density of moderate suburban districts just to the right of the median, and an almost complete absence of overwhelmingly Conservative rural districts.

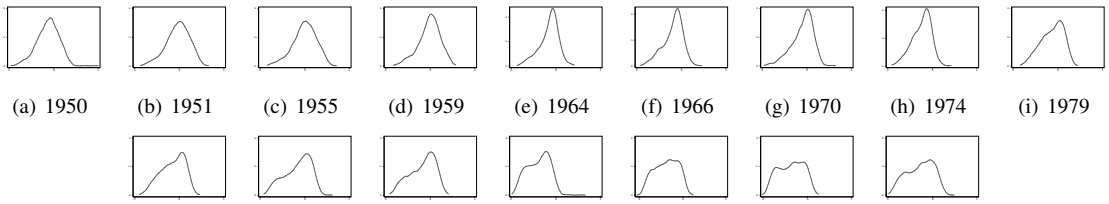
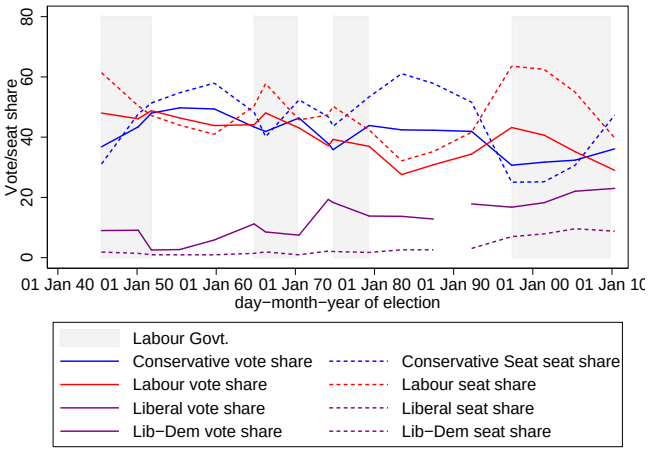


Figure 6.1: United Kingdom, Inter-district Distribution of Conservative Vote Share

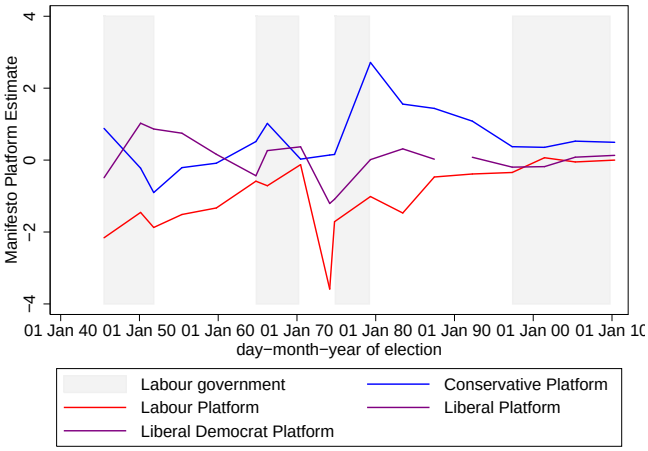
The pattern was rather stable until the sea-change of the 1997 election, in which the entire distribution moved to the left while the left tail of the distribution began to fill up with more observations. Note that through it all, however, even as voters in moderate districts temporarily abandoned the party, the distribution of support for the Conservatives never completely lost its left skew, though it was temporarily suppressed. There was always a large density right around 50 percent in the suburban constituencies, promising the party an attractive support

distribution if it could simply wait for a valence shock in its favor.

Figure 6.2a provides a time series plot of votes and seats for the major parties, with the period of Labour government shaded in gray. Figure 6.2b displays estimates of party platforms on the economic dimension, calculated from the Manifesto data as described in the previous chapter. Note that this scale was standardized over the entire Manifesto data set including all parties in all countries and years to have a mean of zero and standard deviation of one. The measurement error in these data is undoubtedly quite large, and the platform estimates should be viewed with caution.



(a) Votes and Seats



(b) Platform Estimates

Figure 6.2: UK

Yet Figure 6.2b does seem to capture some important features of the big picture of party platforms in Great Britain since World War II. Labour's platform was two standard deviations to the left of the mean at the begin-

ning of the postwar period. During Labour's time in the wilderness in the 1950s and 60s, its platform was rather far to the left, as urban purists held fast to a Socialist ideology with a heavy emphasis on nationalization. Its brief periods in government in the 1970s were apparently associated with platform moderation, and as predicted in the Ansolabehere et al. model from the previous chapter, victory seemed to breed further moderation as centrist incumbents gained influence. The most famous Labour platform moderation was that associated with the shift toward "New Labour" in the 1990s. Labour's policy moderation, combined with a series of scandals and a negative valence shock associated with the events of "Black Wednesday" in 1992, generated the dramatic change in the geographic support distribution in the 1997 election (figure 6.1).

Figures 6.2a and 6.2b may also shed some light on the role of the Liberals and Liberal Democrats. While the Liberals were almost completely extinct in the early 1950s, they took advantage of the fact that Labour's platform had been dominated by the urban extremists, and positioned themselves as a center-left alternative to Labour. This led to a steady increase in vote shares, but without a corresponding increase in seat shares. Shades of the Liberal-Labour district-level coordination problem from earlier in the century began to resurface in the 1970s. The Liberals created not only splits of the left vote within districts, but they also started winning some coordination battles and gaining a handful of seats. In its brief period in government in the 1970s, Labour was only able to govern either with an extremely fragile majority or the explicit cooperation of the Liberals and/or Scottish National Party.

On the economic dimension addressed in Figure 6.2, the Manifesto data suggest that the platforms of Labour and the Liberal Democrats have converged since 1990. However, the expert surveys from the previous chapter suggest that the Liberal Democrats are now actually positioned to the left of Labour on other issue dimensions like social issues and foreign policy. As the vote and seat shares of the Liberals have crept upwards, the battle for primacy on the British left has come full circle to the uncertain period prior to World War I. There are once again two parties of the left unwilling to give ground, and through it all, the Conservatives have enjoyed stable primacy on the right.

In short, when Labour adopted a leftist platform dominated by the interests of urban workers, it lost elections and gave succor to centrist Liberals. It was finally able to govern for a sustained period when it adopted a platform that was unrecognizable to the urban left, but this precipitated a challenge from the left.

6.2.2 Votes and Seats

With this background, we can now attempt to understand the challenge of transforming votes to seats for the British Left. In Figure 6.2a, one can see that for the two major parties, with occasional exceptions, the dashed

line (seat share) is higher than the solid line (vote share), primarily because the Liberals, SNP, and other small parties gain votes without seats. As clarified in the previous chapter, this disproportionate seat share is especially large for the winning party. While it is clear that by far the biggest loser in the transformation from votes to seats is the Liberals, it is not immediately clear from Figure 6.2 whether electoral bias is more favorable to Labour or the Conservatives.

If two parties receive the same vote share, an electoral system is said to be biased when one party receives a higher seat share. This gap between the vote share and seat share, or bias, is driven not only by inefficiencies in the geographic support distribution, captured in the kernel densities in Figure 6.1, but also by factors like inter-district turnout differences and asymmetries in the population of districts (malapportionment).

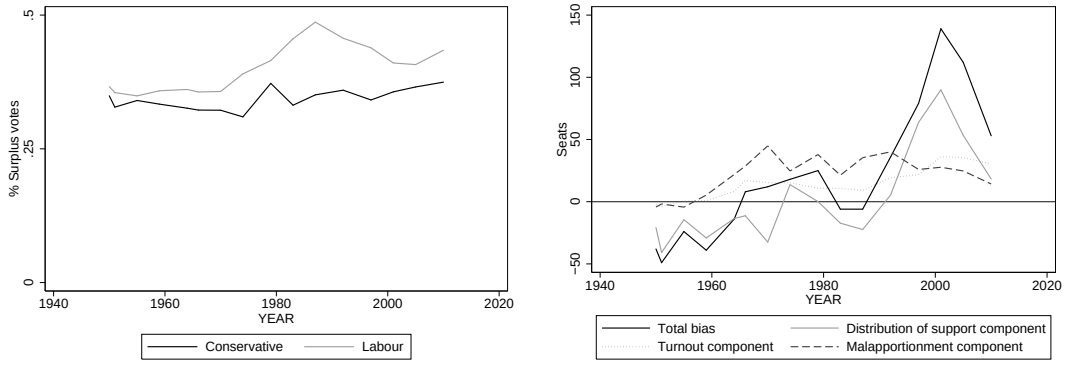
Since elections are rarely tied, electoral bias is something that must be estimated rather than directly observed. Perhaps the most common approach is to follow Tufte (1973) and gather time-series aggregate data on votes and seats from as many elections as possible, regressing seat shares on vote shares for the major parties, and evaluating the seat share predicted by the model with 50 percent of the votes, or alternatively, the vote share that would be required to obtain 50 percent of the seats. This approach has some disadvantages, however, since it allows the natural disproportionality associated with landslides to cloud inference by conflating the swing ratio and bias. Any party with an unusually large vote share, say as the result of a valence shock like war or recession, will appear to benefit from electoral bias in its favor. In most contexts, the model will be based on a very small number of elections, and estimates of bias can be quite substantially affected by individual elections.

A better approach is to use district-level data and obtain separate measures of electoral bias for each election by simulating a hypothetical tied election, and evaluating the seat shares that would be obtained by the parties. To achieve this hypothetical tie, the standard approach has been to apply a uniform swing to all district-level votes so that the overall vote share is evenly divided. The main weaknesses of this approach are the assumption that vote swings are uniform across districts, and the lack of meaningful confidence intervals around the estimates of bias. The advantage is that, using the algebra of Brookes (1959), this quantity can be decomposed into several component parts, including malapportionment (one party achieves disproportionate support in districts with fewer voters), turnout (disproportionate support in districts with more abstentions), and most important given the argument above, the efficiency of the distribution of the party's support (Johnston, Rossiter, and Pattie 1999). For present purposes, this approach provides a useful long-term examination of trends in electoral bias.

After simulating a tied election by applying the uniform swing, it is also useful to calculate some additional measures that capture the relative geographic efficiency of the party's support base. Given the central argument of chapter 4, it is useful to count the votes a party obtains in each district beyond what it needs to win, aggregate

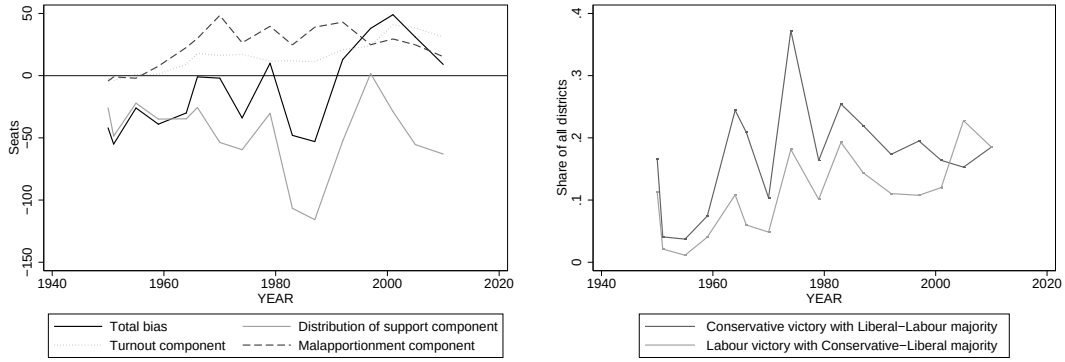
all such "surplus" votes across districts, and divide by the number of votes each party receives in the districts it wins. This provides some sense of the extent to which the party's support base is excessively geographically concentrated.

Figure 6.3a provides this measure of surplus votes for Labour and the Conservatives throughout the post-war period. As the left-skewed distributions in Figure 6.1 would suggest, Labour tends to win its districts with substantially larger majorities than do the Conservatives. There have been no exceptions since 1950.



(a) Surplus votes as share of votes received in districts won, UK

(b) Electoral Bias and its Components in the UK, Conservatives v. Labour



(c) Electoral Bias and its Components in the UK, Conservatives v. Largest Left Party in each District

(d) Coordination Failure in the UK

Figure 6.3: Manifestations of the Geography of Voting in the UK

Next, Figure 6.3b provides the Brookes (1959) measure of electoral bias and its components. In a hypothetical tied election generated by the application of a uniform swing to the district-level results, the dark line indicates the number of seats expected to be won by Labour minus the number expected to be won by the Conservatives. Thus negative numbers can be interpreted as pro-Conservative bias, and positive numbers can be interpreted as pro-Labour bias. The gray line indicates the impact of the parties' relative support efficiency. The dashed line captures the impact of malapportionment, and the dotted line captures the impact of asymmetries in

turnout.

Figure 6.3b indicates a pronounced bias in favor of the Conservatives until the late 1960s, rough neutrality in the 1970s and 1980s, and a sudden and dramatic shift in favor of Labour in the era of Tony Blair. It is important to examine the component parts. First, consistent with the argument above, the bias owing to the efficiency of support has favored the Conservatives rather consistently until very recently. As demonstrated in the kernel densities above, the geography of Labour support changed dramatically with the rise of Tony Blair and New Labour.

Overall bias has trended away from the Conservatives because the malapportionment effect has consistently favored Labour, and has grown over time. The main reason for the effect is the fact that Scotland, the seedbed of the industrial revolution and a Labour stronghold, is over-represented by law. As Johnston (2002) points out, the pro-Labour malapportionment effect has grown over time most likely because of the solidification of Labour support in Scotland, and the fact that populations of pro-Labour mining towns and industrialized cities are dwindling more rapidly than periodic reapportionments can keep up.

It is also interesting to note that the overall bias is pushed substantially in Labour's favor because of the turnout effect. That is, it wins more so-called "cheap seats" in urban districts with low turnout (Campbell 1996). One possibility flowing from the theoretical perspective laid out above is that turnout is lower in Labour's urban bastions because landslide elections are foregone conclusions, and rational voters understand that their vote will not impact the outcome. As communicated by the kernel densities and the graph of surplus votes, the Conservatives tend to win relatively more districts that are competitive and hence have higher levels of turnout.

Given the rather important division between Labour and the Liberals that emerged early in the 20th century, and the various manifestations of the split between the parties of the left, there are some reasons for skepticism about Figure 6.3b, which is predicated on the existence of a two-party system. One should be especially skeptical about the sudden and dramatic improvement in Labour's support distribution. Note in Figure 6.2a that in conjunction with the spike in pro-Labour bias, Liberal Democrats are increasingly winning both votes and seats. In some districts, the Liberal Democrats have won the coordination game on the left, and are now the focal point for leftist voters. The same is true of the SNP in other districts. In districts with large left majorities, the Labour and the Liberal Democrats often split the left vote.

One way to overcome this is to consider only one "left" party in each district. When the Liberals or Liberal Democrats have a higher vote share than Labour, treat them as the party of the left in that district, and consider Labour to be the party of the left otherwise, then conduct the uniform swing and calculate bias estimates. The results are displayed in the third panel of Figure 6.3. This graph is quite different. While the turnout and

malapportionment effects are unchanged, the relatively concentrated distribution of support for the left now comes through very clearly. This effect favors the Conservatives in every election election but 1997, which now looks like an outlier. This graph suggests that if malapportionment were abolished, the relatively attractive support distribution of the Conservatives would allow them to benefit in the transformation of votes to seats.

Another feature of the majoritarian system that is favorable to the Conservatives is the fact that since the revival of the Liberals in the 1970s, they can count on a divided left. At the district level, this generates Liberal-Labour coordination problems like those of the early 20th century. That is, Conservatives can hope to occasionally win districts with leftist majorities because votes are split too evenly between Liberal and Labour candidates (Cox 1997). In order to capture this phenomenon, I have calculated the number of districts each year that were won by Conservatives although the combined vote of Labour and the Liberals (or SDP or Liberal Democrats) was higher. This is plotted, expressed as a share of all districts, for each election in Figure 6.3d. Since the return of the Liberals to prominence, on average more than 20 percent of districts have this quality. For the sake of comparison, I have also examined districts won by Labour although the combined Liberal and Conservative votes were higher. Figure 6.3d shows that there are fewer such districts. In other words, the coordination dilemma is on the left rather than the right. However, Figure 6.3 is consistent with common wisdom that in the last couple of elections, Labour and Liberals—or their voters—have improved their efforts at coordination.

6.2.3 Electoral Reform

Taken together, these graphs help explain the recent positions of the parties toward electoral reform. The Conservatives are still the beneficiaries of a far better underlying geographic support distribution than their competitors, and although there was much talk about electoral bias in favor of Labour in recent years, based on analysis like that in figure 6.3b above, the Conservatives have every reason to push for a continuation of the traditional Westminster electoral system. To the extent there is anti-Conservative bias, it comes from malapportionment, and the fact that turnout is relatively low in leftist urban districts. Thus the optimal strategy for the Conservatives is to push for the continuation of single-member districts but with a strict population equality standard for redistricting. Not only should this allow the Conservatives to benefit in the transformation of votes to seats, but it has the added attraction that it forces the left to confront a familiar district-level coordination problem.

Much like the early Socialists in Chapter 2 or the Canadian NDP today, the Liberal Democrats can be seen as an insurgent leftist party attempting to win a difficult coordination game against the mainstream party of the left in urban and suburban districts. As such, their interest is in proportional representation, as indeed has

been the case since the Liberals' abrupt change of heart early in the 20th century, once their status changed from mainstream to insurgent. The dilemma is that they cannot achieve a majority, and proportional representation has been a deal-breaker for the mainstream parties on the occasions when a group of minority Liberal parliamentarians has been pivotal. Thus the current Liberal Democratic coalition members have settled for a referendum on a second-best alternative: the alternative vote. The key advantage of the Alternative Vote is that it can assuage the coordination problem on the left. Those who prefer Liberal Democrats need not cast votes for Labour out of fear that a split left will hand the district to the Conservatives.

Finally, Labour is the mainstream party of the left attempting to fend off an interloper, and its best course of action is to defend the status quo in order to prevent further losses to its leftist challenger.

6.3 Australia

6.3.1 The Geography of Support

The Australian Labor Party has also struggled throughout the postwar period with an intense battle between urban labor union "purists", who argue against ideological compromise, and suburban opportunists who argue that a pro-business, market-oriented platform is the only way to win crucial pivotal districts in the center of the ideological distribution.

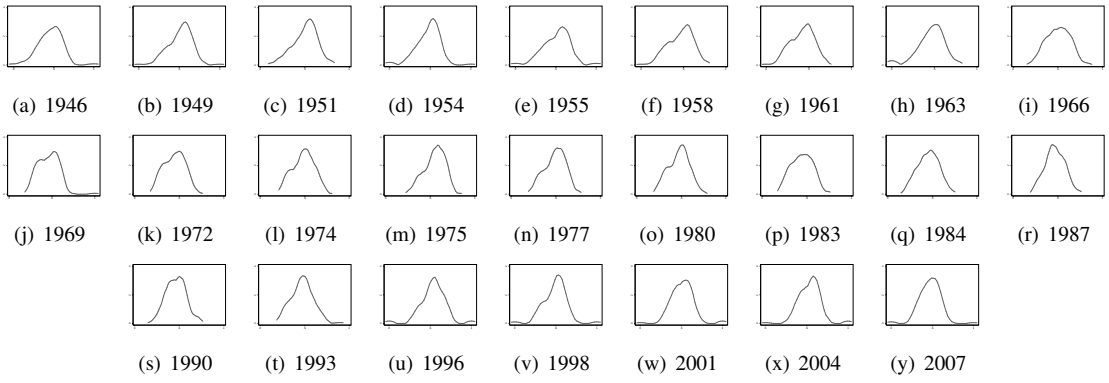


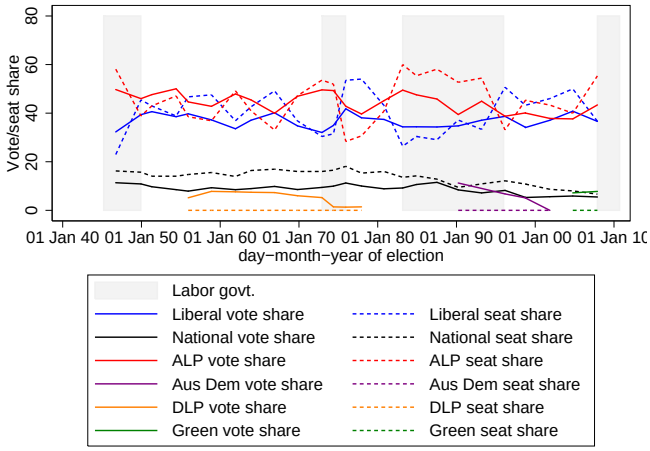
Figure 6.4: The Distribution of support for parties of the right in Australia

This battle is in large part a matter of the political geography of industrialization. Figure 6.4 displays the distribution of vote shares of the Liberal-National coalition for each election in Australia.[1] The early postwar

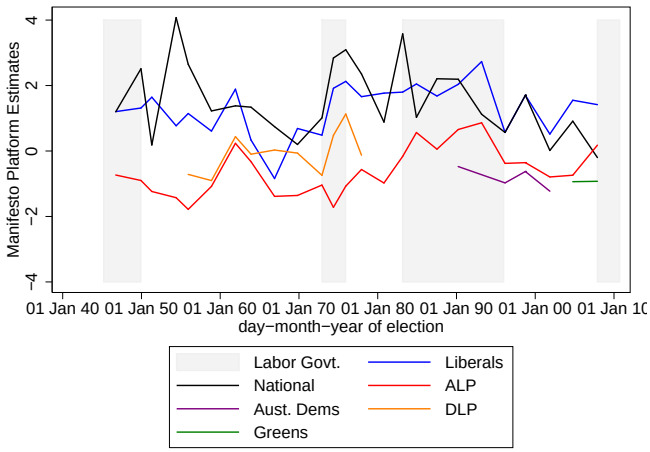
[1]Note that there is a discontinuity between 1993 and 1996. From 1946 to 1993, I use the final vote share of the parties after all redistributions have taken place in the AV system. Two-party preferred vote shares were unavailable. Beginning with the 1996 election, I use two-party-preferred vote shares. I have access to both data sources for 1996 through 2001, and can verify that the distributions look quite similar using either technique.

elections demonstrate the familiar left-skewed distribution. As in Great Britain, there are few landslide districts for the right, but a considerable number for the left. The right enjoys a peak in the distribution just above 50 percent.

The ideological diversity of the districts it must win in order to form governments has always posed a challenge for the ALP, which has been a diverse amalgamation throughout its history. There has always been a simmering conflict in the party between Socialists and moderates, and it occasionally boils over. In the middle part of the century, religion played a role in this battle as well. Like the Labour party in Great Britain, the Manifesto Data presented in Figure 6.5 suggest that the ALP entered the post-war period with a hard-left platform.



(a) Votes and Seats



(b) Platform Estimates

Figure 6.5: Australia

The party's platforms came under intense internal criticism, and in 1955, a largely Catholic anti-communist group led by B.A. Santamaria split from the party. Eventually this group formed a breakaway party called the Democratic Labor Party. Figure 6.5b suggests that they can be understood as a center-left challenger to Labor. Though the social origins are very different, they posed a threat that was somewhat analogous to the Liberals in the UK in the 1970s: they took crucial votes away from the ALP in centrist districts. In fact, this was the explicit strategy of the DLP, known as "veto with a view to reunification." DLP voters were instructed not to give their second-preference votes to the ALP, which allowed the Liberals to win several crucial districts. The hope was that Labor would be forced to accept their demands and the DLP would eventually rejoin the ALP. This split on the left is an important part of the story of Labor's long time in the wilderness from 1950 until the early 1980s.

Since the 1970s, when the DLP finally folded, the Labor party has been divided into formal internal factions known as Labor Right (also known as Labor Unity, versus Labor Left (also knowns as Socialist Left). Over the years, Labor Right has gained the upper hand in the party, and in fact, the "New Labor" concept had its origins not in Great Britain in the 1990s, but in Australia in the 1980s. As indicated in Figure 6.5b, the ALP moved its economic platform rather dramatically to the center in the 1980s in an explicit effort to end the party's frustration in the pivotal districts in the middle of the distribution. According to the manifesto data, the ALP platform in the era of Hawke and Keating was even somewhat to the right of the global mean.

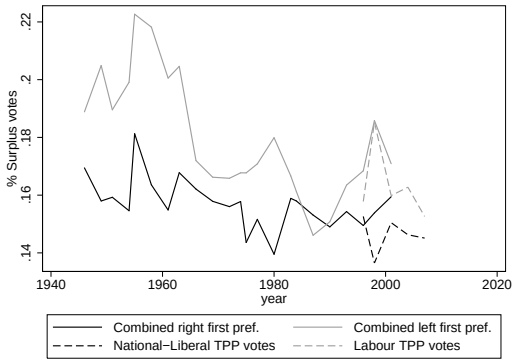
As in Britain, this dramatic change in the party platform led to a dramatic change in the party's support distribution. Note in Figure 6.4 that the change in the kernel density from 1980 to 1983 bears some resemblance to that in great Britain in 1997. Throughout the 1980s, Labor was able to obtain a much better support distribution, such that the peak of the distribution was just above 50 percent Labor.

But as in Britain, this change in the support distribution was only temporary, and the left skew has returned in recent years. Moreover, as with New Labour in Britain, there is a price to pay for moderation. Consternation and frustration among the urban left led to the rise of the Australian Democrats in the 1990s, and more recently, to the success of the Greens. The system of preferential voting limits the damage of these incursions, since many voters giving their first preference votes to these left-wing insurgents will still rank the ALP higher than the Liberals or National. However, it is clear that some left-wing voters are refusing to do so. Figure 6.6c plots the share of all districts where a Liberal or National candidate won the district but the combined first-preference votes for candidates of the ALP, DLP, Greens, Australian Democrats, Communists, and other minor parties of the left outnumbered the combined first-preference votes of the Liberals, National, and various minor parties of the right. Figure 6.6c suggests that this is not a trivial problem for the left, and it did not go away with demise of

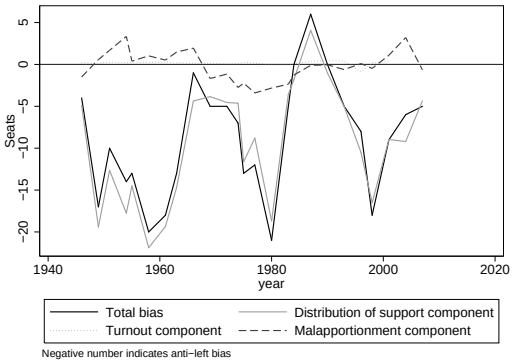
the DLP. On average since 1980, around five percent of the seats are won by the right in spite of leftist majorities in first-preference votes.

6.3.2 Votes and Seats

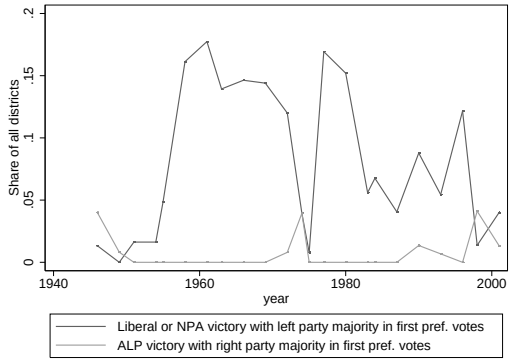
The geography of industrialization has created a powerful source of electoral bias in favor of the Liberal-National coalition in Australia. First, it is useful to contrast the surplus votes of Labor in districts it wins with the surplus votes racked up by National or Liberal candidates in the districts they win. Figure 6.6a shows that as in Britain, the former consistently outnumber the latter.[2] The only exception was the 1983 election that ushered in Australia's "New Labor" phase.



(a) Surplus votes as share of votes received in districts won, Australia



(b) Electoral Bias and its Components in Australia



(c) Coordination Failure in the Australia

Figure 6.6: Manifestations of the Geography of Voting in Australia

Thus as in Great Britain, the skew in its inter-district support distribution causes Labor to suffer from a

[2] Again, the unavailability of district-level two-party preferred data for historical elections creates a discontinuity. For earlier years, I combine all first preference votes for parties of the left and right (solid lines). For more recent elections, I display the results using the two-party-preferred data.

relatively inefficient transformation of votes to seats. Figure 6.6b expresses this using the Brookes method.[3] In some ways, Australia is less complex than Great Britain. Compulsory voting insures that the turnout effect is close to zero, and although Australia has a long history of dramatic malapportionment, especially at the state level, it has not been a significant factor in the generation of electoral bias in the House of Representatives. Thus electoral bias is dominated by Labor's relatively poor inter-district support distribution.

Averaging over the post-war period, Labor can expect to receive around 9 fewer seats than the Liberal-National coalition in a hypothetical tied election. These estimates are roughly similar to those of Jackman (1994). The size of the bias has fluctuated over time, but as in Britain, it only disappeared temporarily in the first year of "New Labor," and then returned to form.

This is not a trivial effect. Going back to Figure 6.5a, if one focuses on elections where the solid red line and the solid blue line are very close together, it is clear that in close elections, the Liberals can consistently expect a higher seat share than the ALP. Moreover, the seat share of National exceeds its vote share in a very consistent way regardless of the closeness of elections. A recent manifestation was in the 1998 election, in which Labor received 51 percent of the seats but 45.5 percent of the seats, allowing the Liberal-National Coalition to form a government.

As mentioned above, owing to the geography of political preferences, the left is also more likely to suffer from coordination failures than the right. Of course the Australian right is not without its own divide. The division between the Country Party (now National) and the Liberals is essentially a divide between the suburban and rural right— a type of partisan brand differentiation. Surveys of experts as well as voters suggest that the ideological divide between the parties is not large. In fact, a formal merger is being explored in several states, and has already been consummated in Queensland. The ideological divide between Labor Left and Labor Right is almost certainly larger than that between Liberal and National.

The gray line in Figure 6.6c is telling. Coordination at the district level between Liberals and National (previously Country) has been very good throughout the postwar period. They exchange preferences very effectively, and the ALP almost never loses seats due to splits between Liberals and National (or more recently, One Nation). In fact, the initial introduction of preferential voting was a strategy by the right in rural districts to avoid coordination problems between the Country Party and the Liberals. It has worked well. However, the divide on the left has been deeper, and coordination has been less effective. The case of the DLP was extremely consequential, and kept Labor out of office for many years. More recently, the Australian Democrats have refused to instruct voters to give preference votes to the ALP.

[3] In this case, the use of combined left and right first-preference votes and the two-party preferred data yielded very similar results for the overlapping years.

6.3.3 Electoral Reform

Given the result of the 1998 election, the anti-left bias of the Australian electoral system is not a mystery. One might ask, then, why the ALP does not propose a transition to proportional representation. By this point the answer is perhaps too obvious, and will become more so after the discussion of New Zealand below. The rise of Labor Right and the moderation of the platform have generated a space for entry by parties catering to the left. While they have made inroads in the Senate, which uses proportional representation, insurgent leftist parties have been held at bay in the House of Representatives, though occasionally causing an ALP defeat by splitting the left. In addition to the comfort and prestige afforded to incumbents in safe seats, a more pressing problem for Labor is that a more proportionate electoral system would generate partisan fragmentation on the left, and the ALP would have little hope of forming a single-party majority in the future.

As is the case in many other countries, the standard-bearers for proportional representation are the leftist insurgents. And once again, the staunchest supporters of single-member districts are the mainstream parties of the right.

6.4 New Zealand

6.4.1 The Geography of Support

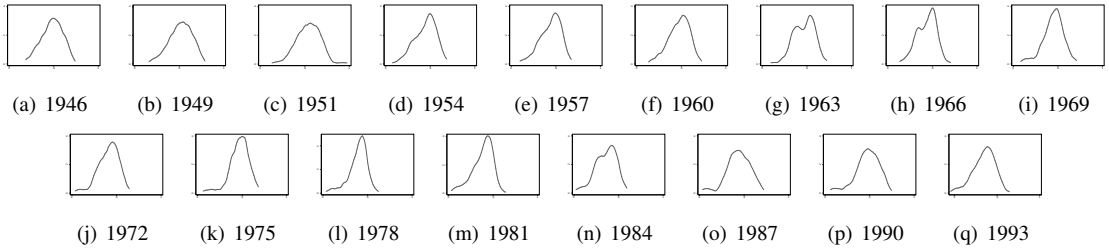
In many respects the story of Labour in the Post-War period in New Zealand is familiar. It had very strong support in its core urban and mining districts, but its ability to win elections and form governments depended upon its ability to win crucial districts in the middle of the distribution. These were primarily suburban and town districts (Johnston year). The inter-district support distribution had the familiar left skew throughout the postwar period.

Consequently, as in Britain and Australia, the Labor party initially struggled to reconcile the hard-left labor union purists to the platform moderation that was necessary to win the pivotal districts. However, as indicated in Figure 6.8b, the party adopted a centrist platform even earlier than “New Labour” in the UK and Australia.

Points that will be made in the rest of this subsection:

Social Credit made a transition from right to left in the 1970s under the leadership of Bruce Beetham. For a crucial period in the 1970s they got into coordination battles with Labour, and for a time, believed they could displace Labour as the mainstream party of the left. They attempted to negotiate strategic withdrawals with Labour, but the negotiations broke down. The left then experiences a different type of split associated with opposition to “Rogernomics” (neo-liberal economic policy of Labour in the 1980). The New Labour party

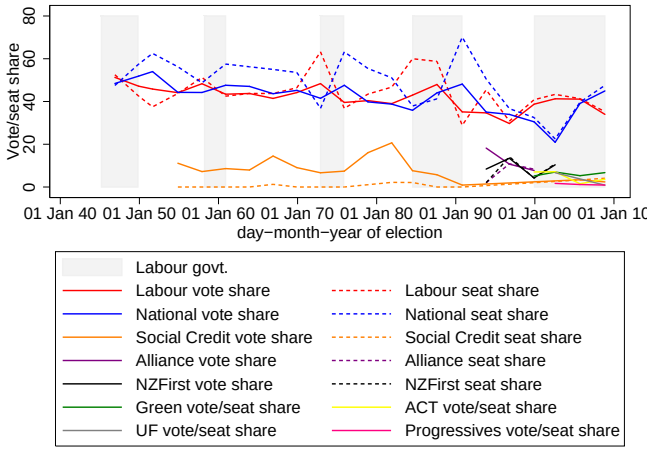
forms, as well as the Values Party, and then eventually the Alliance. The basic story here is that Labour becomes a very centrist part, but this encourages entry on its left flank. This creates costly coordination failures.



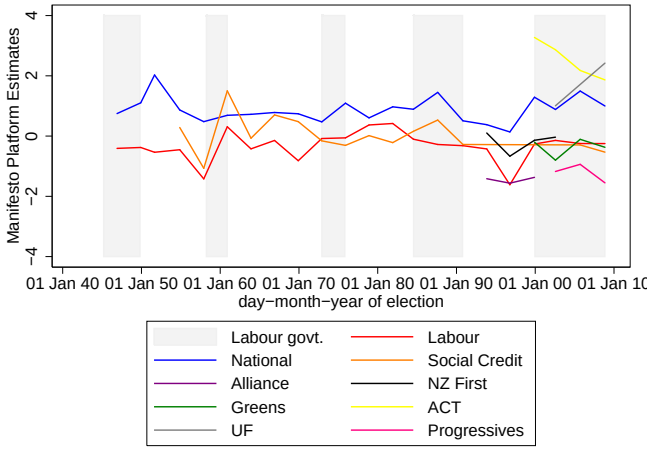
(a) 1946 (b) 1949 (c) 1951 (d) 1954 (e) 1957 (f) 1960 (g) 1963 (h) 1966 (i) 1969

(j) 1972 (k) 1975 (l) 1978 (m) 1981 (n) 1984 (o) 1987 (p) 1990 (q) 1993

Figure 6.7: The Distribution of support for the National Party, New Zealand



(a) Votes and Seats



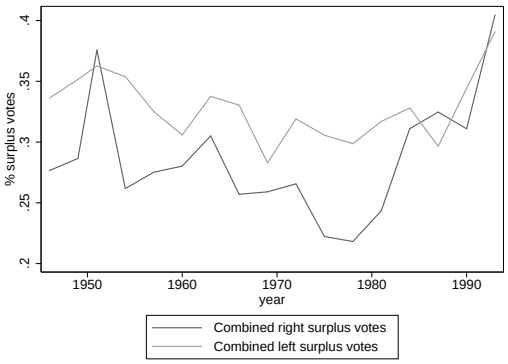
(b) Platform Estimates

Figure 6.8: New Zealand

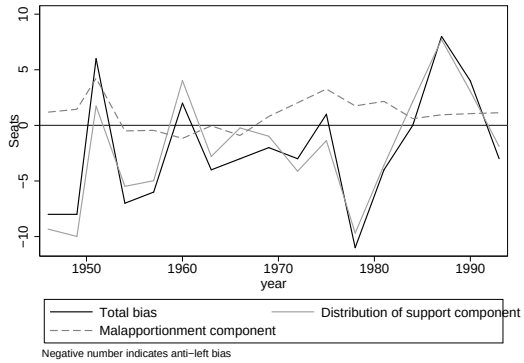
6.4.2 Votes and Seats



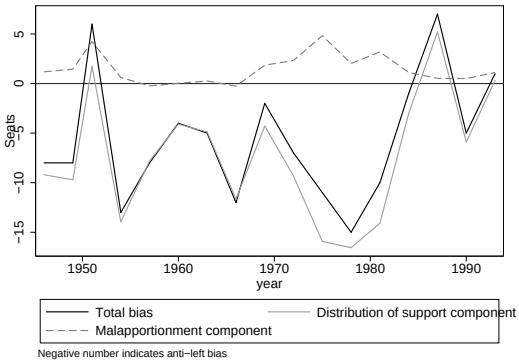
(a) Surplus votes as share of votes received in districts won, New Zealand



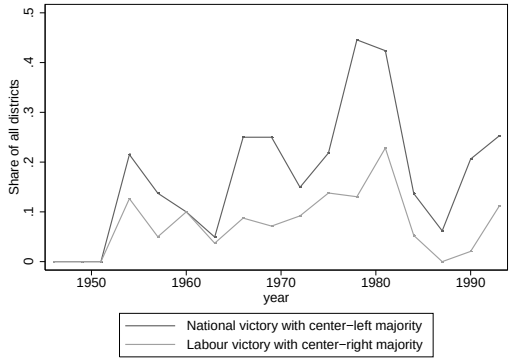
(b) Surplus votes as share of votes received in districts won, New Zealand



(c) Electoral Bias and its Components in New Zealand, Labour vs. National



(d) Electoral Bias and its Components in New Zealand, aggregate left vs. aggregate right



(e) Coordination Failure in New Zealand

Figure 6.9: Manifestations of the Geography of Voting in New Zealand

This subsection will tell a familiar story. Labour's inefficient support distribution led to persistent electoral bias. This was displayed quite dramatically when Labour won the popular vote by a relatively comfortable margin

but received fewer seats and National formed the government in two consecutive elections in 1978 and 1981. An inefficient support distribution was the main cause of this, but as in the UK and Australia, coordination problems with other breakaway parties (including Social Credit) was also part of the problem.

6.4.3 Electoral Reform

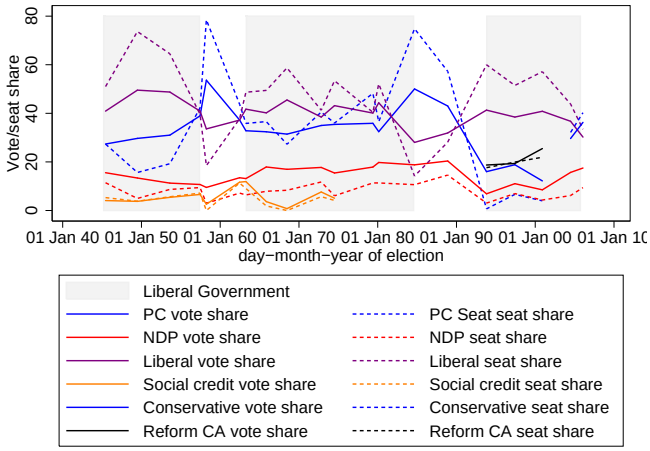
Again, one might expect that Labour would advocate for electoral reform after suffering from persistent bias and losing two consecutive elections in spite of winning the popular vote. But once again, they had much to lose from proportional representation since they had adopted a centrist policy that had generated consternation among the urban left. As Figure 6.8b shows, they were already losing votes (though not yet many seats) to third parties prior to electoral reform. They feared that proportional representation would open the floodgates to splintering on the left. This subsection will briefly tell the story of how the major parties blundered their way into electoral reform. Proportional representation has led to splintering on both the right and left, but especially the left. It now seems quite difficult for Labour to govern alone, though this appears to still be possible for National. In the next draft I'll try to do some district-level analysis to show that the gains of small parties have come primarily in the urban districts.

6.5 Canada

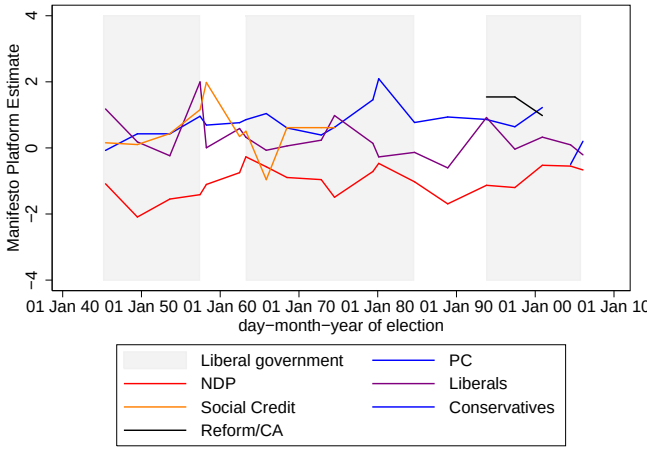
This section has potential to get complicated due to federalism and important variations in party systems across provinces, but I'll try to stick to the most important facts. Above all, an equilibrium has emerged in which the Liberals and Conservatives battle over the pivotal suburban Ontario constituencies. The Liberals are the party of the right in Quebec, where they compete against the Bloc, and in many constituencies on British Columbia, where they compete against the NDP.

In general, my approach is to portray the split between the Liberals and NDP as a classic left split owing to a left-skewed distribution of preferences across districts. This leads to a large number of coordination problems and is beneficial to the Conservatives. Yet the Liberals, as a party of the center-left, have been able to thrive in spite of losing a non-trivial number of seats to the left, because of the somewhat quirky inability of the Conservatives to compete effectively in Quebec. But at the end of the day, the dominant party of the postwar period in Canada is barely recognizable as a party of the left.

I will also probably need to spill some ink on complications like Social Credit as well as Reform.



(a) Votes and Seats



(b) Platform Estimates

Figure 6.10: Canada

Chapter 7

The United States

> Democrats never agree on anything, that's why they're Democrats. If they agreed with each other, they would be Republicans.
>
> Will Rogers

7.1 Overview of work in progress

In contrast to other former British colonies that adopted parliamentary systems of government, the revolutionary break with Great Britain led the United States to style a very different form of executive. One of the lasting features of the presidential form of democracy pioneered in the 18th century United States is that presidents and party leaders lack the requisite tools, above all a no confidence procedure, to force their co-partisans in the legislature to vote for their policy proposals. This in turn frees up candidates in districts that are far from the national ideological median to offer platforms that are tailored to the district-level median rather than the national median. In a parliamentary system, candidates in the districts cannot credibly run on a platform that they will buck the party leadership on salient issues. In a presidential system, there is little to prevent this type of campaign strategy.

This type of platform flexibility reduces the threat of entry by third parties that dogs the party of the left in parliamentary systems. In the United States, the Democrats can offer a left-wing platform in the urban districts and a moderate platform in the suburban districts. In fact, with the right mix of candidates and issues and a valence shock in their favor, the Democrats can even be successful in some relatively conservative Congressional districts. Another complication in a presidential system with winner-take-all districts, especially in the presence

of party primaries, is that incumbents have strong incentives to cultivate a personal reputation that is distinct from their policy platforms or those of their party. This often takes the form of so-called pork-barrel politics. For a variety of reasons, incumbents can be extremely difficult to dislodge, even when the national tide turns against their party.

Because of these distinctive features of presidentialism, the skew in the inter-district distribution of ideology that was generated by the industrial revolution—while perhaps even more pronounced in the United States than elsewhere—manifests itself in rather different ways than in the parliamentary systems of the previous chapter. This chapter explores how the book's key insights shed light on some basic features of American party competition that have either escaped notice or have not been adequately explained.

First, there will be a short theory section, returning to the framework of chapter five and focusing on a situation where instead of choosing a uniform platform for the entire party, candidates in the individual districts have the ability to tailor their own platforms, but with two types of constraints. First, the party has a national or state-wide reputation owing to the platforms of all its legislative incumbents, such that attempts by candidates to distinguish themselves from their party lose credibility as the district median moves further and further toward the tails of the distribution. Second, the ability of candidates to occupy the political center can be undermined by the influence of strong partisans who vote disproportionately in primaries.

This framework helps explain some basic facts about American party competition. The leitmotiv is that, as explained by Will Rogers in the quote above, the Democrats have typically been a more heterogeneous party than the Republicans. This manifests itself in several ways. First, there is a literature that uses a variety of methods to attempt to characterize the positions taken by candidates of both parties in legislative elections. One of the curiosities in this literature is that there is a greater spread of positions across Democratic than Republican candidates. This can be explained rather easily as an outgrowth of the fact that the left tail is more remote from the median than is the right tail of the inter-district ideological distribution. If they wish to form legislative majorities, Democrats simply have more ground to cover than Republicans.

Another important implication of the asymmetric distribution of district-level ideology is that Republican legislative candidates are unable to tailor their platforms sufficiently to compete in the urban far-left districts. Year after year, a large number of urban districts are simply unreachable for the Republicans. On the other hand, since many of the "far right" districts are relatively close to the suburban median, flexible Democratic candidates are able to compete throughout the full range of districts. Notably, they are even able to compete in the rural South and Midwest. This helps explain the observation in the empirical literature on candidate positioning that gaps between Republican and Democratic platforms are larger in districts on the far left than on the far right.

It is useful to focus not only on the tails of the distribution, but on the zone immediately to the left and right of the median district. Moving out by the same ideological distance in either direction from the national median district, there are more districts just to the right than just to the left. Thus when a valence shock favors the Democrats and allows them to win seats on the right side of the national median, a very large number of seats might be in play. However, because so many of the seats to the left of the median are out of reach for Republicans, a pro-Republican valence shock of a similar size can be expected to net fewer seats. Once ensconced and able to use the perks of incumbency to their advantage, quality challengers are discouraged from running, and Democratic representatives can enjoy long careers in districts on the right side of the national median.

The left skew in the distribution of district-level preferences also explains an interesting asymmetry in the nature of split-ticket voting. The vast majority of districts in which majorities cast votes for the presidential candidate of one party while favoring the legislative candidate of the other party are of one kind: Republican presidential candidates and Democratic House candidates. I will show that this is not merely a function of an asymmetric incumbency bias favoring long-serving Democrats. The explanation is that while presidential voting is highly correlated with district ideology, there are more districts within close proximity of the national median on the right than the left, and hence more opportunities for flexible Democrats to pick up "Republican" seats than vice-versa.

By pitching a very large and heterogeneous tent in this way, the Democrats have been able to avoid the initial problem of postwar Labor parties, where urban incumbents pull the platform too far to the left and electoral victory is elusive. In the United States, the Democrats have controlled the legislature for much of the post-war period by winning and holding a large number of center-right districts.

In order to hold on to these districts, their representatives must be able to credibly distance themselves from the ideological positions of their party leadership. While stopping short of starting a new party, as would perhaps be more expeditious in a parliamentary system, they have found it useful to adopt their own name and organizational structure, including the Conservative Coalition, the Boll Weevils of the Reagan era, and most recently, the Blue Dogs.

Next, the chapter takes the natural next step and shows, using data from roll-call votes, that the Democrats are more heterogeneous not only in the platforms they offer on the campaign trail, but also in their voting behavior on the floor of the legislature. While the Democrats frequently preside over legislative majorities, these majorities usually depend on a number of Boll Weevils or Blue Dogs from center-right districts, who stand to be punished by their voters if they allow urban Democrats to push for a leftist agenda. As a result,

Democratic majorities do not translate easily into left-wing policies.

Next, the chapter will turn to a discussion of electoral bias in the United States. Because Democrats so frequently win victories in the legislature, and because of the benefits of incumbency and the prevalence of uncontested seats, electoral bias is difficult to see when examining aggregate election results, and thus has not been a major focus of the political discourse in the United States. Most of the popular and academic attention have been given to partisan, incumbent-protecting, and racial gerrymandering, and surprisingly little attention has been given to electoral bias owing to the residential patterns of Democrats and Republicans. Nevertheless, this chapter shows that especially in industrialized, urban states with the political geography conditions described in Chapters 3 and 4, pro-Republican bias is relatively large and consistent, and most of the observed bias is driven by long-standing residential patterns rather than short-term strategic manipulation by partisan incumbents.

This section will also touch briefly on the issue of race and majority-minority districts. As described in Chapters 3 and 4, the left skew in the distribution of partisanship that is at the heart of electoral bias emerges "naturally" from drawing contiguous districts in the states whose industrial agglomerations received African American migrants during the great migration. In some respects, the Northeast and Midwest, parts of the West Coast, and even parts of the industrialized South are not as different from European countries as they may seem. The migrants moving from rural South to dense working-class neighborhoods in the industrialized North were former slaves rather than peasants. Yet the concentration of left party voters in densely populated areas has perhaps been more pronounced and persistent in the United States than elsewhere because of patterns of racial segregation and the construction of interstate highways.

In any case, compact contiguous districts in states with a history of 19th and early 20th century industrialization would generate substantial pro-Republican electoral bias with or without the Voting Rights Act. What is remarkable about the Voting Rights Act is that it artificially creates the same phenomenon even in states like South Carolina and Mississippi, where African Americans (and hence Democrats) are more efficiently scattered in rural areas.

Finally, this chapter concludes by briefly addressing the same question that concluded the previous chapter. If the Democrats suffer from electoral bias, why don't they change the rules of the game? While neither party has an incentive to propose a more proportional electoral system that might give a foothold to splinter parties, the Democrats do occasionally face opportunities to at least redraw electoral districts to their advantage when they control state legislatures. But as in the other majoritarian countries going back to the 19th century, powerful urban incumbents resist efforts to carve up their safe seats. Additionally, in some states a coalition of minority Democrats and Republicans supports the retention of overwhelmingly Democratic seats designed to allow for

minority representation. And finally, in some states, efforts to break up dominant Democratic districts would likely run afoul of the Voting Right Act.

In fact, when faced with a difficult transformation of votes to seats, Democrats tend to lay the blame at the feet of masterful Republican gerrymandering and efforts at minority representation. As a result, they have turned their reform efforts to the adoption of "apolitical" districting schemes along the lines of those used in the other former British colonies. The inclination is to generate independent districting commissions with the mandate to draw compact, contiguous districts that preserve municipal and county boundaries without regard for political or racial data beyond what is explicitly required by the Voting Rights Act. If the arguments in this book are correct, they will likely be disappointed.

Chapter 8

Policy Bias

8.1 Overview of work in progress

This book has documented the ways in which the industrial revolution generated a long-term pattern of residential location that undermines the interests of the left in majoritarian democracies. Much of the story involves losing elections or suffering from a disproportionality in the transformation of votes to seats. This is an interesting story, but perhaps only for party activists or those betting in election markets. If party platforms converge to the preference of the median voter in the country, none of this should have any impact on policy.

However, this book has also told a more subtle story whereby even if the left is able to subdue its urban radicals, keep potential entrants at bay, and win elections, it can do so only if it adopts a rather conservative policy platform, like that adopted by "New Labor" in Australia, New Zealand, and the UK since the end of the Cold War, or if it includes a healthy contingent of center-right "Boll Weevils" or "Blue Dogs."

From a normative democratic theory perspective, there is much to like about political institutions that produce centrist policies. Yet the interesting possibility raised in chapter 5 is that the "center" favored by majoritarian democracies is not the the median voter in the country, but rather, the median voter in the median district. If the distribution of ideological preferences across districts is sufficiently skewed, the latter will be to the right of the former. This is a difficult thing to demonstrate empirically, but the evidence from large surveys is relatively strong in the United States, and more suggestive in the Westminster countries.

If this is correct, we might suspect that by favoring the interests of some groups over others, institutions shape long-term policy outcomes. Above all, we are drawn back to chapter 2 and the fateful moment in the late 19th and early 20th century when some industrialized countries made a transition to proportional representation

and others maintained small winner-take-all electoral districts.

Though theoretical treatments of party positioning under PR are complicated by the need to theorize about post-election coalitions, it is straightforward to see that in a highly proportional system, geographic clustering of preferences should have no impact on party strategies. Moreover, there is no reason to believe that policies should wander systematically from the preferences of the median voter. Cox (1997) presents a model where in equilibrium, parties position themselves along the left-right dimension at intervals roughly equal in terms of the percentage of the electorate located between them. Austen-Smith and Banks (1988) focus on strategic voting and come up with a similar type of equilibrium, where one party takes the position of the median voter while the other two parties locate symmetrically around the median. Under PR, the position of the median voter should be closely represented by a party, and at worst, the two most centrist parties will be equidistant from the median (Powell and Vanberg, 2000).

Under SMD, however, if the median district is to the right of the median voter and the left can ignore the problem of entry and choose the seat-maximizing platform, the equilibrium platform is to the right of the one that would be selected under PR or a winner-take-all national executive election without districts.

Of course the best way to examine this proposition would be to apply different electoral rules to the same population at the same time and see what happens. This is a very messy experiment, however, since party reputations and platforms inevitably spill over across levels of government and legislative bodies. Nevertheless, it is useful to contrast the Senate delegations of the Australian states, which are selected through proportional representation, with their corresponding lower-chamber delegations. In the industrialized states, the Labor party is more successful in the Senate, and the Senate delegations appear to be to the left of their corresponding lower-chamber delegations.

One can do something similar in the United States, where efforts have been made to combine roll-call votes, candidate surveys, and voter surveys in order to produce comparable measures of "ideal points" across chambers, even including governors and presidents. The hypothesis is that in the industrialized states, senators and governors, who are elected from a statewide constituency, are to the left of the median of the Congressional delegations. While this research is still somewhat preliminary, the hypothesis appears to be borne out.

The remainder of the chapter will turn to the more tenuous task of cross-country comparisons. There is a large cross-country literature showing that in the postwar period, countries with proportional representation have built up larger welfare states and more generous systems of redistribution than countries with single-member districts. The mechanism suggested in this book will be contrasted with those in the existing literature (Persson and Tabellini 2000, 2003; Milesi-Ferretti, Perotti, and Rostagno 2002; Iversen and Soskice 2006).

While the argument in this book is distinctive, there are some areas of overlap. The notion of a continuum of ideological preferences across heterogeneous districts is central to the story of Persson and Tabellini (2000), but in their theory, the crucial aspect of single-member district systems is that strategic parties target centrist districts with local public goods rather than emphasizing policies with nationwide beneficiaries. The argument in this book has most in common with Iversen and Soskice (2006), who make the case that under single-member districts, if there is a party of the left representing the poor and a party of the right representing the rich, the pivotal middle-class voters will have more to fear from the party of the left, which cannot credibly commit not to exploit them with high taxes once in office. Under proportional representation, centrist voters can rely on a political party that directly represents their interests, and it can prevent exploitation by threatening to pull out of a governing coalition. The central argument of this book might makes this argument work with fewer assumptions. Centrist voters in a two-party system might have more to fear from the left simply because its urban core is further from the median district than is true for the rural core of the right.

The crucial mechanism through which proportional representation facilitates greater redistribution in the Iversen and Soskice (2006) model is the greater electoral success of the left that it facilitates. In their empirical analysis, however, a substantial part of the difference between single-member district systems and proportional representation systems seems to be driven by something beyond the greater electoral success of the left under PR.

This book also predicts a lower level of electoral success for the left under single-member district majoritarian institutions, but through a different mechanism. In their empirical analysis, however, a substantial part of the difference between single-member district systems and proportional representation systems seems to be driven by something beyond the greater electoral success of the left under PR. Controlling for the prevalence of left governments, electoral rules still seem to have an impact on redistribution.

One useful exercise is to introduce a measure of right bias into these cross-country regressions. By combining data on party platforms and information about cabinet positions, seat shares, and vote shares, it is possible to contrast the ideological composition of governments, legislatures, and voters. As a first cut, I have been using data collected by Thomas Cusack (2002), which allows for a nice country-level summary statistic of the extent to which the ideological composition of governments is different from the composition of voters. On average over a long period of time, these data show that in countries with single-member districts, governments are indeed systematically and substantially to the right of voters. Moreover, the Cusack data suggest that this is also true on a smaller scale for the countries with relatively less proportional forms of PR involving relatively small districts. This gap between governments and voters can be understood as a traditional measure of elec-

toral disproportionality, but with a sign that captures whether the beneficiary of that disproportionality is the left or the right. Some preliminary cross-country models suggest that measures of representation bias drawn from the Cusack data are better predictors of redistribution and welfare expenditures than a combination of variables capturing government partisanship or the electoral systems variables that have been typically used in existing empirical studies, such as an indicator variable for proportional representation or a continuous measure of district magnitude or disproportionality.

Finally, this book has identified a potentially important but often-ignored part of the story of the growth of the welfare state in the 20th century: urbanization. A review of the empirical literature will show that urbanization rates are rarely included in existing cross-country models of welfare expenditures or redistribution. I will then show that urbanization is an incredibly powerful predictor of welfare expenditures. As cities grew dramatically in the era of heavy industry, leftist parties mobilized voters in dense working-class neighborhoods around an agenda of redistribution and risk-sharing. The argument of this book is that the representation of those urban workers took shape very differently under proportional representation than under single-member districts. I will be able to show that urbanization and electoral rules demonstrate a powerful interactive impact on the growth of the welfare state. The relationship between urbanization and welfare expenditures is quite strong under proportional representation, both across countries and over time within countries, but falls apart completely under SMD. It appears that the growth of an urban working class translated less successfully into welfare expenditures and redistribution due to the geographic dilemma of electoral socialism in the presence of single-member districts.