THREE ARTICLES ON PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION IN AMERICAN CITIES
(with an Introduction)

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By

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation gives the first quantitative account of the adoption and repeal of proportional representation via the single transferable vote (PR-STV, STV, or PR) in American cities. Who enacted it and why? Who repealed it and why? Did legislative discipline vary with known STV electoral strategies?

I find that three groups colluded to enact PR: minority parties, incumbent-party factions that could not win primaries, and, less often, third parties. When the largest of these groups began losing on legislation, it colluded with the largest party to repeal PR. It did so to absorb the smaller parties’ voters.

Further, legislative discipline flagged when parties endorsed more than one popular candidate. I give circumstantial evidence that low party discipline resulted from a party’s accumulation of popular incumbents.

I draw on two new sets of data. One comprises election and referendum returns in three similar cities that chose different electoral rules. The second comprises 5,127 roll-call votes, 126 unique legislators, 1,011 rounds of STV vote-counting, 1,001 candidates, and their party affiliations over 25 elections. The data come from three very different cities representing US experience with PR: Cincinnati (1929-57); New York City (1937-47); and Worcester, Mass. (1949-61).

INDEX WORDS: proportional representation, single transferable vote, electoral system change
Acknowledgments

I am not the first to attempt an account of proportional representation (PR) in American cities. One big challenge has been getting the data to tell a compelling story. The other is persuading people that the project is worth doing. These hurdles sometimes overlap.

For supporting this project in its earliest stages, I thank Kent Weaver, Hans Noel, Dan Hopkins, and Josep Colomer. Kent said I was studying American politics, and Hans assured me of it. Dan persuaded me to study PR’s adoption as well as its repeal everywhere but in Cambridge. Josep has long known about the 24 PR cities and was eager to read my drafts. Each of these advisors was comfortable with my largely exploratory project.

Dennis Pilon and Doug Amy gave me resources I needed to dive in. Dennis shared digital copies of most issues of the *Proportional Representation Review*, 1893-1932, as well as other sources. Doug was the last to study the 24 PR cities. He handed down the contents of Leon Weaver’s filing cabinet, which were supposed to ground a book called *Proportional Representation in American Cities*.

Thanks to the Massive Data Institute (MDI) at Georgetown’s McCourt School of Public Policy, we now have quantitative data on American PR elections and the resulting legislative politics. MDI’s generous travel grant made it possible for Todd Donovan to say I had “more than just anecdotes to go on.” Like Josep, Todd has long known about the 24 PR cities. If my story is compelling, I owe that largely to MDI.
Ancient local election data are not easy to get. If the Worcester Election Commission had not preserved the results of its November 1947 election, I would not have thought to start the story with incumbent-party defection. The same is true of Waterbury’s Silas Bronson Library, just a block from the Law Offices of John P. (and Sandra) Santucci, PC, where the erstwhile Democrat exists today on microfilm.

The value of our record keepers cannot be overstated. Lucia Shannon of the Brockton Public Library connected me with David J. MacRae, and David scoured the local Enterprise for Brockton charter history. Carolyn Ford, Paulette Leeper, and Amy Searcy of the Hamilton County Board of Elections found, digitized, and sent vote transfer matrices for all but one Cincinnati PR election. Yale University’s Sterling Library keeps early copies of Cincinnati’s City Bulletin, which contained the roll-call votes that proved I could and should collect the rest. Robyn Conroy hauled to me an endless stream of materials – all “Plan E/CEA collection, unsorted” – from the basement of the Worcester Historical Museum. These gave context to the contents of Worcester Public Library’s vertical file, curated in part by Joy Hennig.

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On my second trip to Worcester, Daniel Klinghard, Father John Savard, and Pat Christensen arranged a comfortable room in the Jesuit Community at the College of the Holy Cross. That trip enabled a data-gathering mop-up as well as conversation with Judge Paul V. Mullaney, elected to the final PR council in 1959. His son Paul A. Mullaney makes an excellent cup of coffee.
Photographs of old books do not (yet) turn themselves into machine-readable matrices. I thank Georgetown University’s Government Department for a Jill Hopper Memorial Fellowship, which gave me the time I needed to build the data sets.

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The memory of PR lives on in some places, and I am thankful for having been able to check my story against it. My Worcester informants included Howie Fain, Joseph F. Zimmerman (emeritus at SUNY-Albany), and former Mayor John B. Anderson. Bill Collins of Cincinnati knew Ted Berry and made sure I paid due deference. Congressman Bill Gradison shared insights from his father’s days on that city council. Rob Richie’s great uncle was George H. Hallett, who presided over the rise and decline of PR in America. Without Rob, I might not have known about the 24 PR cities. Without Rob, in fact, I might be working in commercial real estate.

Finally, I thank Eusebio Mujal-Leon. Without Sam, I would not have been at Georgetown, and I might not have written what follows.
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Today in the United States, there are four ways to populate a legislature. One is to hold elections in a series of single-seat districts, awarding each seat to the person with most votes. When each voter in each district can mark only one candidate, this method is called “first-past-the-post.” Ranked voting and runoff methods are increasingly popular, but all ask voters to pick between the top two candidates. If the same kinds of candidates contest all of the districts, only one or two groups will win seats (Duverger 1954; Cox 1997). This is how we elect the U.S. House of Representatives and most other bodies.

A second way is to elect all members from one multi-seat district. Voters mark as many candidates as they want, up to the number of winners to elect. If the largest group of voters votes the same way, and if they use all available votes, only that group will win seats (Calabrese 2000; Colomer 2007). At-large, plurality elections of this type became popular in local government in the first half of the 20th century. Congress banned this method for federal elections in 1967, and some states still use it for lower-chamber contests.

A third approach retains the multi-seat district but limits the number of votes one can cast (i.e., limited voting). The reason for this is to let the next-largest group win some seats. One can get the same result by letting voters cast more than one vote for a single candidate (i.e., cumulative voting). These rules exist for some local elections where racial discrimination is a problem. Connecticut and Pennsylvania use
limited voting so that Democrats can win seats in Republican towns and vice-versa. Illinois state house elections were by cumulative voting from 1870-1980. Evidence suggests these methods lead to population-proportional results when there is a cohesive majority and just one minority (Brockington et al. 1998; Gerber et al. 1998; Bowler et al. 2003).

The fourth way to fill a legislature increases the odds that even smaller groups will win seats. If voters in each group pick the same set of candidates, and if those groups are arbitrarily large, each group wins seats in rough proportion to its votes. People in Australia, Ireland, Malta, New Zealand, and Scotland call this method “proportional representation via the single transferable vote,” or PR-STV. From 1915-61, its users in 24 American cities simply called it “PR.” Since 1962, only the voters of Cambridge (MA) have used this rule in major elections.¹

This dissertation gives a political science account of PR in American cities (figure 1.1).² Who enacted it and why? Who repealed it and why? My answers are based on the largest study to date of electoral and council politics under PR in these places. The data cover 5,127 roll-call votes, 126 unique legislators, 1,011 rounds of STV vote counting, 1,001 candidates, and their party affiliations over 25 elections in Cincinnati (1929-57); New York City (1937-47); and Worcester, Mass. (1949-61). These data let us do what no study has done before: quantitatively link electoral behavior and voting system change to the legislative politics of PR jurisdictions.

PR was one part of a broader movement that reshaped institutions in thousands of cities (Frederickson et al. 2004: 43). To understand how PR wins were unique in

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¹ A binding 2006 referendum in Minneapolis established STV for that city’s library board elections. The New York City school board was elected by STV until 2002.
² Data are from Childs (1965) and Weaver (1986). Weaver errantly reported a 1953 repeal vote in Worcester (MA).
this wave, I do something else that no other study has done: contrast PR wins with losses and comparable non-events.

Contra much existing work on local-level electoral system choice, my findings center on policy-seeking political parties and their constituent factions. I argue that PR won when incumbent-party defectors and local minority parties needed each other to increase their power in government. The result in such a city was a multi-party system comprising the old incumbent party, its defecting wing, and one or more minority parties.

Efforts to repeal PR were attacks on these multi-party systems. Under PR, the old incumbents sought return to monopoly status, and other small groups sought the power to force policy concessions. PR’s fate then depended on the largest of these small groups. When it began to lose on policy decisions, this second-largest faction turned on PR. It did so to absorb other voters and make itself pivotal.

1.1 Previous work

There have been four waves of research of PR’s rise and decline. Most of it simply documents the episodes. Since that is a difficult job on its own, we have had to wait to say something general about who chose the rules and why. In the prevailing account, PR lasted as long as Progressive reformers were stronger in cities than the party machines they challenged.

The earliest work noted adoption campaigns and early PR elections. These pieces seldom gave information about the partisan identities of reformers. Some of these writers cast incumbent parties as “machines” and spoke favorably of “good government” reformers. If present at all, information about politicians focused on their occu-
pational backgrounds (Gallup 1921; Coker 1922; Maxey 1922; McBain 1922; Moley 1923; Goldman 1930; Vieg 1939; McCaffrey 1937, 1939).

A second wave was overtly prescriptive, and much of this came from the Proportional Representation League's (PRL) own leadership (Hoag 1923; Hoag and Hallett 1926). One book lauded PR as the “key to democracy,” which would relieve the voter “from the frequent necessity of making a choice between two evils,” of picking the “candidate of one or two political machines” (Hallett 1937:viii-ix).

Ferdinand Hermens gave the rebuttal. A German exile and student of Joseph Schumpeter, he lectured across the United States on what he saw as PR’s dangers.
His 1941 book said PR caused European fascism, then mined the U.S. cases for examples of scandal. These were his points in Cincinnati, for instance, during a 1947 campaign to replace PR with at-large, plurality voting. Subsequent work responded to Hermens. Either it refuted his claims about the “breaking up of parties” or scoured the cities for positive anecdotes (Zeller and Bone 1948; Shaw 1954; Straetz 1958).


The most recent studies have begun to cultivate a narrative. First, drawing on the first-wave articles, PR enactments reflected “reformer” victories over party “machines.” PR’s repeal was then a historical accident. In particular, the election of Communists in New York City and a popular civil rights figure in Cincinnati eased machine efforts to beat back reformers in those cities and elsewhere (Amy 1993, 1996, 2002; Kolesar 1996; Pilon 2013). Barber (1995a, 2000) further finds that “unpopular minorities” provoked repeal in each of five Ohio cities. According to this story, PR would have


4. Two dissertations are worth note: Bloomfield (1926) on Ashtabula (OH) and Dobrusin (1955) on seven Massachusetts cities.
survived in the cities if it had not collided with McCarthyism and the early Civil Rights Movement.

But who gave repeal the votes it needed when it finally won at referendum? Is it accurate to say PR simply lost “Progressive” support? A scan of the dates in Figure 1.1 shows that most cities repealed PR long after the end of the Progressive Era, and many even enacted it after that period’s end.

One clue comes from Weaver (1986), who observed in a footnote that minority parties in some cities participated in repeal referenda after years of regarding PR with favor. Other case studies have confirmed that observation: Democrats in Cincinnati and Toledo (Straetz 1958; Anderson 1987); Republicans in New York City (Zeller and Bone 1948; Prosterman 2013); and the “reformist” Democrats themselves in Worcester, Mass. (Binstock 1960).

This study’s big goal is to go beyond “machine” and “reform” in describing the dynamics of institutional change. My encompassing hypothesis is that partisan and party-factional interests explain these decisions.

In addition to being historically interesting, the answers to these questions have contemporary policy implications. Scholars argue PR would increase the number of parties (Disch 2002; Taylor et al. 2014), reduce legislative polarization (Lijphart 2015; Drutman 2016), increase the numbers of racial and ethnic minorities in government (Guinier 1992; Guinier and Torres 2003; Trebbi et al. 2008), increase the number of women in government (Norris 2006), and promote the growth of the welfare state (Lijphart 1999; Alesina and Glaeser 2004; Bawn and Rosenbluth 2006; Bonica et al. 2013; Taylor et al. 2014). A study of PR’s failure in American local government is relevant to each because, as others have noted, PR frequently caught on locally before parties imposed it nationally (Cusack et al. 2007, 2010).
1.1.1 How STV worked in the cities

STV was the form of PR in all American cities. In its simplest implementation, voters rank candidates in order of preference. To win a seat, a candidate must have a Droop quota of votes.\footnote{Less often, the quota is fixed by law, and if no candidate achieves that quota, the $N$ highest vote-getters win seats. $N$ is determined by dividing the total valid first-choice votes cast by the fixed quota, then rounding. This was the rule in New York City.} A Droop quota ($Q$) is a function of the sum of valid first-preference votes cast in an election ($V$) and district magnitude ($M$):

\[ Q = \frac{V}{M + 1} + 1 \quad (1.1) \]

The vote count proceeds in rounds. The first step is to sum all first-preference votes and calculate the quota, rounding down. If no candidate has a quota, the last-placed candidate is eliminated, and ballots for that candidate are reallocated to next-ranked candidates on those ballots. If one or more candidates does have a quota, ballots for those candidates in excess of quota become surplus ($S$). Surplus ballots are reallocated to next-ranked candidates on those ballots. Under a random-transfer STV rule such as the “Cincinnati method” used in all American cities, $S$ ballots are randomly drawn from the winning candidates’ piles. The counting process iterates between surplus transfer and sequential elimination until $M$ seats are filled.

With respect to STV in American cities, three other details stand out. First, except in New York City, it was used to elect city councils with plenary power. A figurehead mayor could not dissolve the legislature nor keep a bill from coming to the floor. This meant majorities could change from bill to bill. Even in New York City, which was the only city without a miniature parliamentary system, council never thought to empower floor leaders to set the agenda, relying instead on motions to table.
Second, nomination in every city was by petition, and PR replaced primaries wherever they existed before (Merriam 1909; Merriam and Overacker 1928; Harris 1951). It was easy to get onto the ballot in the seven Massachusetts cases, as state law required only 50 signatures. In New York City, by contrast, a candidate needed 2,000 signatures to be on the ballot. Local lawmakers elsewhere increased signature thresholds over time. In Cincinnati in 1949, for instance, City Council authorized a referendum increasing the minimum from 500 to 800.6

Third, ballots in every city but New York were non-partisan, but voters did have access to information about the candidates. In Massachusetts cities, candidates’ incumbent status and residential addresses appeared next to their names. The latter signaled socioeconomic status and ethnicity. Together with incumbency, it likely would have signaled party and/or party-factional affiliation.7 For example, which candidates are Republican? Which are Democrats with high-status addresses? Which are working-class Democrats? Elsewhere parties and slating organizations issued pre-marked sample ballots, which they instructed voters to carry with them on election day.8

1.2 WHO WOULD WANT (TO KEEP) PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION?

Why would a group want PR voting, and why would it want to repeal it? I assume that parties comprise policy-seeking groups (Bawn et al. 2012), and my answer has two parts. First, the group is not getting policies it wants under the current electoral system. Second, the group expects to get better policies under a different electoral system.

7. See, for example, recent experimental results by Crowder-Meyer et al. (2017).
system. In political science terms, it thinks it can enter the winning coalition by changing the rules. Unless that group is very large, however, it cannot change the rules on its own.

1.2.1 How a group thinks it might do better under PR

Figure 1.2 illustrates why a hypothetical group of Reform Democrats would want to enact PR. Bars represent the number of seats held in a fictive nine-member body by each of three factions: regular Republicans, regular Democrats, and self-styled Reform Democrats. To keep the example simple, assume the pre-PR seat distribution is the result of districting arrangements or behavior in primaries, so that with-PR results more closely reflect each faction’s strength in the electorate than the pre-PR results. The dashed horizontal shows a council majority. The implications are clear. Reform Democrats have much to gain from PR. Without it, the regular Democrats can pass whatever legislation they want. But no faction can pass legislation alone with PR in place.

Figure 1.2 also shows that Reform Democrats do not have the fiat power to impose proportional representation (Benoit 2004, 2007). They need help, and this is where the Republicans come in. Note that Republicans in this example face the same temptation as reform Democrats. More proportional rules would raise their seat share to the point where they might be pivotal in council.

There are two ways to end up with groups thus tempted. One is for new parties to appear on the scene, which is the shared empirical result of most work on PR adop-
Figure 1.2: Seat distributions in a hypothetical nine-seat legislature with simple majority rule, before and under PR.
tion. The other is for an existing party faction to declare independence. Chapter 2 gives circumstantial evidence that at least 15 of the 24 American PR enactments followed this pattern: a defecting group from the incumbent party teaming up with one or more minority parties. By comparing successful and failed referenda on PR, we will see that PR failed when this type of alliance did not take shape.

1.2.2 HOW A GROUP THINKS IT MIGHT DO BETTER BY REPEALING PR

Figure 1.2 says nothing about which winning coalition will appear in the legislature. Three are possible: Republicans and Democrats, Republicans and Reform Democrats, then Democrats and Reform Democrats. Recall that PR did not co-exist in America with the potential for snap elections. This means two or more of these coalitions

9. See Rokkan (1970), Boix (1999, 2010), Blais et al. (2005), Colomer (2005), Cusack et al. (2007, 2010), Calvo (2009), and Leeman and Mares (2014). The main point of disagreement is whether ruling parties enact PR exclusively, as for Boix (1999) and Rokkan (1970), or there is some coordination between parties in and outside of government (but not necessarily the cabinet), as in Cusack et al. (2007), Calvo (2009), and Renwick (2010). My argument tends toward a compromise model. My party-split argument is also consistent with the observation by Shugart (2001, 2003) that monopoly control of government, which he terms “pluralitarian” politics, generates pressure for electoral-system change.

10. My priors favor the party split, not least because American party identification is notoriously rigid (Campbell et al. 1960; Lewis-Beck et al. 2008). Turning Democrats into Republicans, Greens, or Socialists is quite difficult. Decomposing Democrats into warring factions is less difficult. This may be one reason why the Proportional Representation League settled on the single transferable vote (STV), which is the only form of PR compatible with non-partisan ballots. Otherwise one must use some type of party list, which hints at a second reason for STV. I show in Chapter 2 that PR only started winning once the national PR lobby abandoned its anti-party stance. This coincided with involvement by prominent Republicans and Democrats in its board of directors. Republicans and Democrats can agree on non-partisan PR because it prevents third parties from presenting their lists to voters. Socialists knew this, and they rejected non-partisanship accordingly (Thompson 1913; Sitton 1995).

11. Unfortunately I cannot directly test whether reform Democrats’ incentive to split (using the Figure 1.2 example) results from seat-vote disproportionality. This is because we cannot identify factions until they have gone it alone.
can occur in the same legislative session without threat of immediate punishment by voters (Huber 1996; Becher and Christiansen 2015).

A group may want to repeal PR if it finds itself in the losing coalition more often than not. The reason for doing so is to increase its seat share by absorbing an opponent’s voters. Returning to Figure 1.2, consider a legislative session in which Reform Democrats vote more often with Democrats than Republicans. Republicans may calculate that repealing PR will force Reform Democratic voters to pick sides. Cox (1997) hints at this incentive. Electoral systems can be more or less permissive, where permissiveness refers to how many votes a group must control for it to win any seats. Repealing PR makes the electoral system less permissive. It will cause groups to need more votes to win seats. For Reform Democrats to avoid wasting their votes under PR’s replacement, they will have to join another group.

Note that Republicans are the second-largest group in this hypothetical legislature. What if Reform Democrats, which constitute the third-largest group, are in the losing coalition more often than not? I argue that size conditions a group’s position on repeal. Bigger groups expect to absorb smaller ones, which is why smaller groups will cling to PR even if they often lose on policy. Chapter 4 derives and tests this hypothesis.

1.3 Proportional representation as a reaction to primaries

One might suggest that PR and primary elections are functionally equivalent ways to solve the problem of forming a winning coalition. Primaries achieve this before an election, and PR achieves it after, at least formally. Returning to the running example above, Reform Democrats could do just as well in the same party with Republicans as they could by forming a post-election coalition with Republicans. Americans therefore no longer use PR because history and chance favored primaries.

12. I thank Josep Colomer for raising this possibility.
Theoretically speaking, there are two reasons why primaries are not functional equivalents for PR elections. First, the coalition parties in two-party democracies are not simple pre-election coalitions. Contra the pre-election coalitions we see in some multi-party democracies, “coalition parties” are sticky alignments lasting for decades (Aldrich 1995; Bawn and Rosenbluth 2006). In terms of the running example above, an unhappy group of Reform Democrats is unlikely to join the Republican Party, then contest its primaries, even if the two groups agree on some policy issues.

Second, primaries do not necessarily lead to factional compromise. A primary asks voters to pick the winning faction.\textsuperscript{13} True, there are few policy consequences if non-policy issues are what distinguish the candidates. If candidates stand for different policies, however, a primary decides which policy stance will lose. The Proportional Representation League was acutely aware of this fact. Consider Hoag (1923:108):

For, after all, the primary does nothing more than carry the same old difficulty one step further back: offering the voters at the primary itself only the same old single-shot ballot, it often presents to him only the same old dilemma between voting for a candidate he really wants and voting for the less objectionable of the two who have some chance of winning [a plurality primary contest].

Empirically speaking, PR almost always replaced two-stage, primary-general election systems. Table 1.1 gives the year that state law imposed direct primaries for local office, then the first PR introduction in that state.\textsuperscript{14} Voters everywhere but Connecticut would have experienced primaries before turning to PR.\textsuperscript{15}

\textsuperscript{13} One recent line of work in political science has well-networked party insiders driving primary voters’ behavior (Cohen et al. 2008; Kousser et al. 2015).

\textsuperscript{14} Jessica Trounstine (2006, 2008) provided the data on primary introductions.

\textsuperscript{15} Even in Connecticut, however, cities selectively used primaries to choose nominees. Waterbury is one such city, and it rejected PR at a 1939 referendum. See Chapter 2.
This study does uncover circumstantial evidence of frustration with primary elections. As I show in Chapter 2, precinct-level primary contestation in at least one city predicts support for PR in its successful 1947 referendum.

1.4 Case selection

This dissertation uses some hard-to-get data. We want to know about elections and legislatures in cities, some with non-partisan elections, all more than half a century ago. The ideal data set would let us to do three things:

- Separate all PR adoptions from non-PR adoptions, ideally explaining the timing of all reforms;
- Characterize the politics of all PR councils;
- Contrast that politics with behavior on contemporary non-PR councils.

Pending the collection of a more exhaustive set of electoral and roll-call data, I have assembled records from two representative groups of cities. The first helps
us understand how PR adoptions were different from other episodes of city charter reform. I draw on descriptive histories of the 24 PR cities, data on the entire universe of big-city charter-change referenda from 1900-50, then case descriptions and precinct-level election returns from three similar cities: Worcester (MA), which adopted PR; Waterbury (CT), which failed to adopt PR; and Brockton (MA), which adopted at-large, plurality voting.

The second data set lets us examine PR’s operation and repeal in Cincinnati, 1929-57; Worcester (MA), 1949-60; and New York City, 1937-47. There are seven good reasons for studying these cities.

First, they are spatially representative. Figure 1.1 shows that PR adoptions clustered in three states: Ohio, Massachusetts, and New York City.

Second, each used PR for a relatively long time. Assuming we can identify the parties and factions at work in each, the use of PR over multiple elections lets us see council politics evolve. We end up with 25 council terms to compare.

Third, these cases represent the universe of PR institutional frameworks. Cincinnati and Worcester both had council-manager charters, unicameral legislatures, fully at-large elections, figurehead mayors, and simple majority rule in their councils. All but New York City used PR with a council-manager charter like this. Where the council-manager cities had one relevant veto point (the chamber median), New York City had multiple veto points: the chamber local law pivot (two-thirds), the Mayor, and the Board of Estimate.

Fourth, these cities reflect the known range of party systems taking shape under PR. Cincinnati is famous for nominally two-party competition (Straetz 1958), but we will see that one of these two parties was a joint endorsement agreement between reformist Republicans and the local Democratic Party: the Charter Committee or Charter Party. New York City was famous for overtly multi-party politics: Tammany
Hall, Republicans, the American Labor Party, and by 1945, the Liberal and Communist parties as well (Prosterman 2013). Worcester purports to have had only one party, a good-government slating group called the Citizens’ Plan E Association, or CEA (Kolesar 1996). CEA turns out to have been the Charter Committee in reverse: a joint endorsement scheme by regular Republicans and Democratic Party defectors.

Fifth, the sample lets us test conventional wisdom on PR’s repeal. Cincinnati is where we get the story about race relations. New York is where we get the story about leftism. Worcester never generated a dramatic narrative like these two. The most prominent description of its politics suggests low-level conflict among white ethnics with a tinge of anti-Semitism (Binstock 1960).

Sixth, these cities reflect the range of PR’s replacement electoral systems. Cincinnati switched to nonpartisan, at-large plurality. New York City switched to partisan elections in single-member districts with partisan primaries. (Each state assembly district doubled as a city council district.) Worcester switched to nonpartisan, at-large plurality with a nonpartisan, at-large winnowing primary.

Finally, repeal in each of these cities came from the inside. It was not banned by courts nor state legislatures, as in California, Connecticut, and Michigan. This means we can use the history to think about how PR would work today. How long would PR last if applied to state legislative elections?

My data come from many sources in libraries and museums in the respective cities. Each chapter contains a description of the data used therein.

1.5 Should politics under the single transferable vote be analyzed as multi-party?

When asked about proportional representation, Americans who have heard of it will name a system in which voters choose among parties. More than two parties should be viable, and “proportionality” should refer to a relationship between seats and votes at the party level. Does it make sense to analyze the American episodes in these terms? In particular, were district magnitudes large enough for more than two parties to be viable (Taagepera and Shugart 1989)? More critically, how can parties be units of analysis when elections are candidate-based? The following sections address these concerns. District magnitudes were large enough to produce multi-party delegations, and despite STV’s compatibility with a party-free environment, parties existed in the dissertation cases at least.

1.5.1 Was district magnitude sufficient for multi-party outcomes?

The Droop quota formula (equation 1.1) makes clear that the potential for seats-votes proportionality depends largely on district magnitude. When the district returns a single winner (i.e., \( M = 1 \)), the quota becomes one more than half of all votes. Prevailing typologies treat this as a different electoral system entirely (Norris 1997; Bormann and Golder 2013). Known internationally as the alternative vote (AV) and among some Americans as “instant runoff” or “single-winner ranked-choice voting,” the \( M = 1 \) case uses transfer votes to manufacture an electoral majority. This is why recent electoral reform debates in Canada and the United Kingdom have stalled. Large parties (e.g., the Liberal Party of Canada) tend to like AV because it accommodates expressive third-party voting while consolidating parliamentary majorities. At least one U.S. Libertarian opposes AV because, rather than give the Libertarian Party
a toehold in government, he believes it will benefit Republican candidates (Sorens 2016).

No American city in this analysis had AV elections. Of the 24 PR cities, 20 had fully at-large elections with district magnitudes of seven or nine. This meant that the minimum percentage of votes needed to win a seat was either 12.5 or ten. Four other cities had multi-seat districts with a range of magnitudes. Elections in Boulder were staggered such that three of nine seats were filled in each election, giving a Droop quota of 25 percent (Winter 1982:9). Cleveland had four districts of seven, five, six, and seven seats, respectively, so that the quota ranged from 12.5 to 18.5 percent of votes (Moley 1923:653). West Hartford had four districts of five, one, four, and five seats, respectively (Gallup 1921:358). Finally, New York City treated each borough as its own district whose magnitude varied with turnout. Table 1.2 gives the district magnitude in each borough at each of the five PR elections. Except one single-seat district in each of New York and West Hartford, parties in all PR cities never confronted a threshold of more than 25 percent.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Election year</th>
<th>Bronx</th>
<th>Brooklyn</th>
<th>Manhattan</th>
<th>Queens</th>
<th>Staten Island</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1937</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1939</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1941</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1943</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1945</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 1.3 shows that, for the dissertation cases at least, multi-party legislative delegations did exist. The measure given is the effective number of seat-winning parties \( N_s \), which discounts parties with very few seats (Laakso and Taagepera 1979). As points of comparison, Bormann and Golder (2013:367) note that average \( N_s \) for
lower chambers has ranged between about 2.25 and three for established democracies with majoritarian electoral systems (1946-2011), then between 3.5 and 4.5 for established democracies with proportional systems over the same period. Treating the global PR average figures as baseline expectations, party systems in Cincinnati, New York City, and Worcester ranged from “sufficiently” fragmented to slightly less so than expected. $N_s$ in New York City was especially low in certain years, not unlike results in countries with PR and one “dominant” party (e.g., South Africa) (Taylor et al. 2014:180-1).

Figure 1.3: The effective number of seat-winning parties in each dissertation case.
1.5.2 The role of parties in candidate-based elections

There are two big reasons to worry that parties were not important for election outcomes in the cities considered. One is that voters could have ranked whomever they wanted, directing vote transfers at will, regardless of party endorsement. Second, nomination everywhere was by petition. Who were the parties? Were they at all important in election campaigns?

For each city, we can identify three ever-present factions. The first is whatever remained of the pre-PR governing party. For Cincinnati, this is the regular Republican Party. In Worcester and New York City, it was the Democrats.

A second faction in each city was the pre-PR out-party. This was the Democratic Party in Cincinnati, then the Republican Party in New York and Worcester.

A third ever-present faction was the “reformist” wing of the pre-PR governing party. I use “reformist” only to differentiate this group from governing-party regulars. Each such group had its own brand. These were Charter Republicans in Cincinnati and the CEA Democrats in Worcester. Self-styled “good government” parties like these were common across the United States at the time, such that Bridges (1997) terms them non-partisan slating groups (NPSG). The analogous group in New York was the American Labor Party, explicitly founded to promote New Deal Democratic policies in that city (Ellis 1979: 231).

Although we know little about the partisan composition of Bridges’ NPSG in other cities, these groups had pre-election nominating deals with the main pre-PR out-parties in Cincinnati and Worcester. Once the reformists and out-parties had settled on a ticket, they jointly gathered nominating petitions, distributed information about their slates, and instructed voters to rank only those candidates. So long as voters followed instructions, STV would function more like an open-list PR system. With
open-list PR, voters may alter the order of a party’s list, but the allocation of seats to members of that list only depends on that list’s total votes. Figure 1.4 shows how slates deployed this strategy in Cincinnati, and Figure 1.5 gives an example from Worcester.\textsuperscript{17}

Joint nominating worked differently in New York City. Republicans and the ALP would enter their own slates for City Council elections but endorse the same candidates for executive offices, namely the Mayoralty and Board of Estimate. In 1945, the ALP switched to nominating with Tammany Hall.

I have said that reformist wings and minority parties were subsumed in coalition parties in two of three cities. How then can we think of the minority parties (e.g., Cincinnati Democrats and Worcester Republicans) as having had separate brands? Available evidence suggests that attentive voters would have been aware. In Cincinnati, for example, Republicans would refer to “Charter-Democrats” instead of just “Charter.”\textsuperscript{18} In Worcester, it was common knowledge that certain CEA candidates represented the Republican Party. Locals would refer to these people as holding “the Yankee seats” (Binstock 1960).

How well did these factional trios monopolize access to office? Of 144 seats filled in Cincinnati’s 16 PR elections (1925-55), only three winners did not come from any of the three groups above: endorsed Republicans, endorsed Democrats, or Charter Republicans. One of these ran on a separate Progressive Democratic ticket in 1935, then won as an independent after leaving Congress in 1939. A third independent won in 1927. Worcester produced similar results. Of 54 seats filled by PR elections there


\textsuperscript{18} See, for example, a statement on municipal annexation issues in the \textit{City Bulletin} of October 15, 1952. Mayor James G. Stewart was using such language as early as 1936, referring to an “unholy alliance of disgruntled Republicans and Democrats.” See “Good Job,” \textit{Cincinnati Enquirer}, Oct. 27, 1937, p. 12.
Figure 1.4: A joint Democratic-Charter Republican ticket from the Cincinnati PR elections of 1951 (Cash, Democratic leader; Proctor, Charter Republican leader).
Figure 1.5: A joint Republican-CEA Democratic ticket from the Worcester PR elections of 1959 (Holmstrom, Republican leader; O’Brien, CEA Democratic leader).
(1949-59), only one went to someone outside of the three key groups. That was an 
unaffiliated candidate nonetheless endorsed by CEA.

Nomination control in New York City worked differently, since coordination for 
executive office did not carry over to the Council, but only two of 113 winners there 
did not come from one of the following parties: ALP, Communist, Democratic, Fusion, 
Liberal, or Republican. They were James A. Burke, an independent from Queens in 
1937, and former Democratic presidential candidate Al Smith, elected from Man-
hattan in 1939.

As a final look at the deterrence of non-endorsed winners, figures 1.6-1.8 present 
the actual and effective numbers of candidates ($N_c$) in each PR election in each of 
the three cities. Solid trends indicate the actual number, and dashed trends indicate 
the adjusted measure. $N_c$ in this case gives us a sense of the number of serious can-
didates. 19 Serious candidate entry comes downward overall in Cincinnati. A spike in 
the mid-1930s reflects two more slates, the Roosevelt Democrats and the Progressive 
Democrats. Roosevelt Democrats never won a seat. Serious entry in Worcester comes 
rapidly downward after that city’s initial elections. Only in New York City does can-
didate entry increase somewhat, probably due to the end of World War II. Note in 
Table 1.2 above that council sizes were comparatively small during these years, which 
reflects the lower-than-average wartime turnout. (Again, council size in New York 
varied with voter turnout.)

19. I exclude Staten Island because low candidate entry there would make it difficult to 
read the rest of the trends. The official numbers of candidates were seven in 1937, four in 
1939, two in 1941, two in 1943, then three in 1945.
Figure 1.6: Actual and effective numbers of candidates in Cincinnati PR elections.
Figure 1.7: Actual and effective numbers of candidates in Worcester PR elections.
Figure 1.8: Actual and effective numbers of candidates in New York City PR elections.
1.6 Plan of what follows

Chapter 2 asks, “Who enacted PR and why?” I give circumstantial evidence that in at least 15 of 19 documented cases, the coalition for a PR city charter included an incumbent-party faction and one or more pre-PR minority parties. In at least 17 of those cases, the pro-PR coalition included an incumbent-party faction at least.

Chapter 3 documents and analyzes party discipline in the resulting legislatures. Does party discipline vary systematically with any feature of STV elections? There are two big reasons to think it might. First, candidates in an STV election can direct their vote transfers across party lines, anticipating legislative voting that also crosses party lines. Second, nomination by petition and the elimination of primaries can force parties to accept candidates they otherwise might not have backed. I analyze legislative discipline at the faction and pre-election coalition levels, and I find evidence for the first effect but not the second. Factional discipline waned when two very popular candidates appeared on the same ticket. I give circumstantial evidence that this was one price of ticket-balancing, which might not have been necessary with stronger levers of nomination control.

Chapter 4 asks, “Who repealed PR and why?” I derive and test the hypothesis that whether PR survives depends on whether the second-largest faction is most often in the winning coalition. My strongest evidence comes from single-chamber Bayesian scalings of the entire set of roll-call data, as well as case descriptions and archival sources from Cincinnati, New York City, and Worcester. If a faction is most often in the winning coalition, we might say it is pivotal. In spatial terms, it has positioned itself to pick the winning side.

Each chapter is written as a stand-alone paper, edited for readability in this format. I have done this with an eye to publishing each on its own. Chapter 2, which
covers PR adoption, is published in *American Politics Research* ([santucci2016](#)). Chapter 3, covering party discipline under the single transferable vote, is under review at *Electoral Studies*. Chapter 4 has twice been a conference paper.
Chapter 2

Who enacted PR and why?

Notwithstanding extensive research on local-level electoral institutions over the past five decades, scholars have said relatively little about the origins of PR.\(^1\) Twenty-four cities had the single transferable vote between 1915 and 1961. Who was responsible for that choice of electoral rules? Our best guess about PR’s origins is that “reformers” used it to weaken “party machines” (Childs 1965: 65-8; Banfield and Wilson 1966: 96-8, 307; Weaver 1986; Barber 1995b; Amy 1993, 1996, 2002).

The machine-reform paradigm tells us relatively little about the kinds of actors at work. Machines practice favoritism, but so do many politicians. Machines are hierarchical, but so are many parties (Wolfinger 1972). Hierarchy and favoritism have existed under many types of local government (Bridges 1997; Trounstine 2006, 2008). For reasons of historical accuracy and contemporary practice, this study aims for a more precise sense of who the reformers were.

I therefore break with existing PR work in two ways. First, I build on partisan motive, not the machine-reform distinction. Reformer victory over machine politics suggests PR was an anti-party institution, but parties themselves can be agents of reform. For example, Anzia (2012) has shown how parties imposed off-cycle elections in order to increase their power in government. Furthermore, a now-famous anecdote

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\(^1\) Examples of research on local-level institutional choice are Lineberry and Fowler (1967), B. R. Rice (1977), Knoke (1982), Gimpel (1993), Bridges (1997), Bridges and Kronick (1999), Svara and Watson (2010), and Choi et al. (2013). An exception is Trebbi et al. (2008), who study rules-choice separately from municipal form of government.
has the Democratic boss of Kansas City imposing council-manager government to consolidate his own party’s control of the city (Mayhew 1986; Trounstine 2008). It may be that partisanship at least partly explains the spread of PR.

Second, I take selection bias seriously. This is the first study of local PR choice to compare adoptions with negative cases: failed attempts to impose PR, then successful attempts to impose at-large plurality. The idea is to isolate a logic that classifies reform episodes.

I argue that politicians from multiple parties enacted PR to gain direct access to government power. There are two ways to get such an alliance. Consistent with the comparative literature on PR adoptions, the first path involves third-party emergence. A second possibility involves splits in incumbent parties. I look for evidence of both paths. While third parties were a factor in Ashtabula and New York, party splits were on the scenes of all other documented PR adoptions. Finally, I offer circumstantial evidence that party splits occurred where incumbent-party factions wanted to eliminate direct primaries.

The chapter proceeds as follows. I first consider possible reform paths and the types of reform alliances that might want each. This section also asks “why STV” and not one of the other known types of PR. Section 2.2 lays out a strategy for discerning PR adoptions from failures and non-events. Section 2.3 uses case descriptions to show that incumbent-party defectors participated in 17 of 19 well-documented PR enactments. In 15 of these cases, I find evidence that defectors colluded with one or more minority parties.

Section 2.4 provides within-city evidence of (1) defector-minority party collusion and (2) defector reaction to primaries. I compare charter reform episodes in three similar cities to illustrate these points. First, an incumbent-party split separates PR
adoption from a failure and a non-event. Second, incumbent-party defectors appear to have organized to win the pre-PR primaries.

Section 2.5 then looks for circumstantial evidence of party splits in two samples: all big-city charter reform episodes from 1900-50, then all STV referenda from 1900-56. The final section culls case history for policy sources of incumbent-party factionalism.

2.1 Why a proportional system? Why the single transferable vote?

Charter reform was frequent in the 20th century, but the choice of PR was rare (Childs 1965). It should not have been. From 1914-64, the National Municipal League included PR-STV in its model council-manager charter. Of the thousands of cities to implement that charter, only 23 included its PR provision (Frederickson et al. 2004: 43). The rest opted instead for at-large plurality. If the reformist impulse alone explains where PR took hold, every city with a council-manager charter should have adopted PR. Who really made these choices?

The institutions themselves hold clues. PR promotes government formation after elections, and that may have been some reformers’ goal. If it was, reform alliances may have reflected internal divisions. If divisions existed, they were deep enough to prevent the choice of non-PR rules, which tend to promote pre-election coalition. Partisanship is one potential source of deep division. Party factionalism is another. I speculate here that pro-PR alliances were at least multi-factional and potentially multi-party.

Consider alliances for the other type of council-manager charter, which relied on at-large plurality elections. Bridges (1997) argues these alliances set up one-party regimes in the American Southwest. The parties in those cases were “good-government” committees, which she terms non-partisan slating groups (NPSG).
NPSG seized on a familiar property of at-large plurality: single factions find it easy
to dominate these contests by presenting common slates (Calabrese 2000). Others
suggest that NPSG in cities with at-large plurality elections were in fact regular
political parties. An early analysis of precinct-level voting in three cities (1949-57)
found that support for Republican gubernatorial candidates was correlated with
support for the NPSG slate at 0.77 or greater (Williams and Adrian 1959). More
recently, an event-history analysis of 191 big cities finds that county-level unemploy-
ment and Republican presidential voting are the strongest predictors of manager
charter adoption, 1930-65 (Choi et al. 2013). I provide further evidence below that
single parties supported adoption of at-large plurality charters.

What about the PR charter? The model charter’s history itself suggests its archi-
tects sought to promote multi-party government. PRL leaders had settled on a tem-
plate PR-manager system by 1913, but dissenters still insisted on nonpartisanship
(Thompson 1913). One year later, major-party backers of the Proportional Represen-
tation League (PRL) pressed for a break with the initiative, referendum, and recall
movement.\(^2\) This reversed the PRL’s explicitly anti-party stance of 1896: “direct legis-
lation [initiative, referendum, and recall] tends to destroy party lines.”\(^3\) Dropping this
stance coincided with immediate success. With financial support from PRL donors,
Ashatabula (OH) became the first PR city in 1915.\(^4\) The National Municipal League
formally endorsed PR in 1916, and by 1932, it had merged with PRL. PRL leaders
overseeing the merger included two sitting Senators, two ex-Senators, and two ex-
Governors. Four were Republican, and two were Democrats.\(^5\)

\(^2\) Proportional Representation Review, October 1914, p. 25.
\(^3\) Direct Legislation Review, December 1896, p. 49
\(^4\) Proportional Representation Review, October 1915, p. 15.
\(^5\) Proportional Representation Review, January 1932, p. 3.
PR adoptions in foreign countries lend further support to the multi-party hypothesis. The common thread in empirical work is that new-party entry prefigures PR. Colomer (2005) finds that an increase in the effective number of parties tends to precede the choice of PR. Blais et al. (2005) find that countries tended to adopt PR after an election under two-round runoff rules, which they take as a proxy for pre-PR multi-partism. Rokkan (1970) and Boix (1999) argue PR was a strategy for containing rising Socialist parties. Leeman and Mares (2014) find support for a legislative-district version of the Boix-Rokkan argument in roll-call votes of the 13th German Reichstag. Calvo (2009) argues that seats-votes disproportionality resulting from new-party emergence gave existing parties incentives to favor PR. Finally, Pilon (2013:Chapter 4) argues that the PR-manager charter was a compromise between Socialists who wanted PR and reformers who wanted council-manager government.

The problem with a new-party-emergence hypothesis is that PR gained most of its traction after the Progressive and Socialist parties had declined. Roosevelt Progressives had disbanded by 1919, and their La Folette successors did so immediately after “Fighting” Bob’s unsuccessful 1924 presidential campaign (McKay 1947). On the political left, support for presidential and gubernatorial candidates all but collapsed by 1920 (Hirano and Snyder 2007). Rather than third parties of national or even regional importance, it may be that rebellious party factions created de facto multi-party systems in cities.

6. Ahmed (2012) makes a similar argument, through she focuses on the 1842 adoption of single-member Congressional districts.
7. Andrews and Jackman (2005) show how advantage from seat-vote distortion can explain largest-party positions on PR in a manner consistent with the seat-maximizing model of Benoit (2004).
2.1.1 Why the STV form of PR?

The breaking-up of incumbent parties also would explain why STV with nomination by petition became the favored form of PR. Carey and Shugart (1995: 428) note that nomination control and party cues are weakest under this form of PR, which they term STV with “open endorsement.” Other available forms of PR would have empowered organized parties to dictate defectors’ election prospects.

Until the PRL’s commitment to STV in 1914, League members vigorously debated two other quota-based PR methods. The Gove system would have let each candidate propose their own list, and a vote for a candidate was a vote for the list. Assuming party leaders could draw up the most popular lists, votes would flow only to same-party candidates. At the same time, a so-called “free list” system corresponded to what we now know as open-list PR. With the free list, each party would present its own list. While voters would be able to alter the election prospects of individual candidates on a list, they would not be free to split their tickets. As it turned out, weak prospects for ticket splitting were the main reason for opposition to the Gove and free list systems (Gove 1894: 41-7). Relative to STV, both alternatives would have made elections easier for established parties to win.

2.1.2 Potential outcomes of charter reform

Whether based on ruling-party splits or new-party entrants, an effort at city charter reform can end in one of four ways. Figure 2.1 summarizes these, given state law permits charter reform and a referendum majority is required. On path (a), there is no change; the extant majority retains power. Path (b) is the textbook case of Progressive Era charter change; a new majority attacks the ruling party, implementing
council-manager government with at-large elections. Call this new majority a “cohesive majority.” At the end of path (c), multiple parties (or factions) work together to enact STV. Call this grouping a “fragmented majority.” Path (d) is minority-elected government without institutional change.\(^8\)

![Diagram of argument]

Figure 2.1: Four potential charter reform outcomes.

2.2 Empirical strategy

Overall, we need to know how PR wins, at-large plurality wins, and PR failures were different from each other. The main task is to learn which parties and factions were involved in each. The first step in my analysis identifies pro-PR alliance leaders’ partisanship from case histories.

My second step provides within-city evidence that PR wins differed from PR losses and at-large plurality wins in terms of the actors involved. Relaxing the assumption

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\(^8\) A path (d) example is Bridgeport (CT) in 1933, when the Socialist ticket beat both Democrats and Republicans on a minority of votes. See Associated Press, “Bridgeport Picks Socialist Mayor,” *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, November 8, 1933.
that at-large adoptions were single-party-led, I compare three similar-city charter change episodes in depth. One produced STV, one failed to produce STV, and one produced at-large plurality. This comparison relies on case history, newspaper accounts, and precinct-level referendum results. Only in the STV adopter should we see persuasive evidence of bi- or multi-partisanship.

I then ask about the role that primaries may have played in galvanizing support for a party split. If incumbent-party defectors were reacting to trouble winning direct primaries, STV referendum results should be correlated with factional cohesion in those primaries. To see whether this is true, I gather information on primary outcomes for two cases: an STV success and an STV failure.

In the fourth step, I ask whether conclusions from the three case histories are likely to generalize across reform episodes. First I compare all reform charter adoptions in cities ever among the 100 largest, 1900-50, focusing on partisan balance in the respective counties. If party splits supplied the junior partners in pro-PR coalitions, PR ought to have emerged only in relatively balanced jurisdictions. Put differently, partisan balance is a necessary but insufficient condition for the emergence of a fragmented majority. Party-attacking reformers and minority parties would have needed each other’s support only where either faction could not organize a majority alone.

The fifth step supplies more circumstantial evidence of multi-party PR coalitions. I compare vote shares in all referenda ever held on STV, 1900-56. I identify these referenda from the Proportional Representation Review and successor publications, 1893-1958. I stop in 1958 because the PR League declined by that point. Its monthly column in the National Municipal Review became irregular, and only three of 24 cities still had PR. If PR occurred in (a) balanced jurisdictions (b) with the cooperation of out-parties and a faction of the ruling party, those coalitions should be oversized.
The sixth section considers sources of splits in ruling parties. Here I consult the PR historiography for policy roots of local-party factionalism. This section was not part of the research design. Recall that there are two logical paths to a fragmented referendum majority. One involves new party entry. The other involves a ruling-party split. We will see that party splits account for the vast majority of PR adoptions. This last section accordingly tries to give some sense of grievances motivating disunity.

2.3 Party splits, new parties, or both?

Who led charter reform where STV succeeded? I consult available case histories, focusing on how authors identify the partisanship of elites involved in charter negotiation. The case descriptions are thin on numbers. For example, they do not tell us how many registered Republicans broke with a locally incumbent Republican party to support STV. Therefore, when table 2.1 refers to “some Republicans,” this means minimally that some elites defected from a ruling Republican party. When a party does not carry the qualifier “some,” this means the formal party organization put its weight behind STV.

Information on the partisanship of elite coalitions for STV are consistent with a split-driven reform pattern more often than not. Figure 2.2 reports the frequencies of different alliance modes for all 24 STV-adopting cities. For five cities, I could not find any history. Histories for two more identify ruling parties but not change agitators (Boulder and West Hartford). In two of the remaining 17 cases do documents identify only ruling-party actors (Saugus and Revere, MA). In 13 more cases, negotiators came exclusively from the ruling party and its main opposition. Two final cases involved elites from the ruling party and more than one former out-party (Ashtabula, OH and
New York City). Overall, in 15 of 19 documented cases, incumbent party defectors cooperated with the leaders of former minority parties in efforts to pass PR elections.

2.4 **Within-city evidence: defector-minority collusion**

If STV adoption typically involved a defector-minority party alliance, we expect to see most out-parties and a substantial part of the outgoing majority party supporting it at referendum. Our confidence increases if we can connect these trends to the presence or absence, in descriptive records, of party leaders’ posture toward reform. Contrasting STV wins with failures and non-events (i.e., at-large plurality adoptions) will draw out these differences.
On the quantitative side, I interpret the correlation of precinct-level support for charter reform with some indication of voters’ partisanship. Precinct-level party registration rates are an obvious candidate, but many cities have discarded them, and registration may not capture turnout. Instead I use the vote in partisan mayoral races. In all but one city, mayoral voting occurred on the same day as the charter referendum.

On the descriptive side, I probe written sources for evidence of ruling-party disunity on the question of charter reform. The sources are secondary if available and helpful, local newspapers if not. I also consulted archives for one case. When consulting newspapers, I identified the dates of relevant elections, then read each issue for the week in advance of the relevant date. Newspapers are a good source of early-century political information. Many printed precinct-level election returns for primaries and caucuses, and politicians used them to communicate with voters.

Sampling follows a most-similar logic. I chose three cities with common structural traits: Brockton (MA), which adopted at-large plurality in 1955; Waterbury (CT), which rejected PR in 1939; and Worcester (MA), which adopted PR in 1947. All are within 150 miles’ drive, witnessed reform attempts at mid-century, were among the 100 largest US cities at the time, had similar demographic profiles, had similar economic bases, and underwent industrial decline at mid-century. Each involved an attempted departure from the mayor-council form of government. Each had direct primaries at the time of its referendum, and each had a Democratic administration. Table 2 presents all available characteristics of each city at the time of its referendum. Measures are from the City Data Book (U.S. Dept. of Commerce, Bureau of the Census 1978).

9. Data are from the City Data Books (CDB) for 1942, 1948, 1950, and 1955. All variables except reform outcome, referendum year, prior partisan control, and presence of direct
2.4.1 STV non-event: Brockton’s 1955 at-large plurality vote

Brockton (MA) adopted a seven-seat council-manager charter with plurality elections in 1955. The prior mayor-council system had been in place since 1888. Change was a Republican effort to dislodge the Democratic Party.

Republicans consolidated control of city government following a move to biennial elections in 1921. The party thereafter built a precinct-based organization robust enough to help it survive five corruption indictments in 1925 and a series of divisive primaries in 1935. Every Mayor during the period was Republican. Then the tide turned.

Consistent with partisan trends in wider New England, Democrats won eight of eleven mayoral elections from 1935-55, but rising Republican strength in the late 1940s and early 1950s meant an opportunity to retake control.

Brockton’s 1955 referendum on at-large plurality elections had overwhelmingly Republican support (Figure 2.3). Graph tokens reflect the actual data, and the diagonal line segment is represents the fit of a least-squares regression ($\beta = 0.62, \sigma = 0.05$). The more Republican the precinct, the more it supported charter change.

2.4.2 STV failure: Waterbury’s 1939 vote

If Brockton chose plurality along party lines, Waterbury (CT) rejected STV along party lines. Its charter failed in 1939 because Democrats restored internal unity in advance of the referendum.

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11. The Brockton Enterprise, late October and early November issues, on microfilm at the Brockton Public Library.
Waterbury entered the 1920s under Democratic control, direct mayoral elections, and a 15-member council elected from five three-seat plurality districts. The 1929-39 reign of Democratic Mayor T. Frank Hayes remains a local legend. Leading Hayes’ opposition was William J. Pape, owner of two of three local newspapers. Hayes and Pape sparred throughout the 1930s, with Pape typically backing Republican mayoral challengers (Monti 2011).
Division in Democratic ranks gave Pape and Republicans an opportunity to pursue charter reform. The first internal challenge came in 1937, when Democratic State Senator George T. Culhane ran against Hayes on a Republican-Independent Democratic fusion ticket. Then, in 1939, the Democrats verged on collapse after a jury convicted twenty-three Hayes associates of fraud and conspiracy. A power struggle ensued with Hayes’ resignation. While Culhane organized his 1939 Democratic primary campaign, party regulars searched for a nominee.¹²

Republicans and anti-organization Democrats made overtures to Democratic rank-and-file. They courted Southern and Eastern European immigrants, relative latecomers to the city, arguing that the Democratic Party was an Irish-run, Irish-serving machine (Monti 2011:53).¹³ The “no” campaign featured appearances by Mayor Fiorello La Guardia, who himself had won on a GOP-led fusion ticket before backing the 1936 STV campaign in New York City (Prosterman 2013).¹⁴

Days before the charter vote on October 3, 1939, Democrats averted a split, uniting in public opposition to STV. The front page of the October 2 Democrat carried two letters-to-the-editor opposing charter reform. (Front pages are not typical places to print readers’ letters.) That page also featured the following headlines: “Culhane Predicts Defeat of Charter” and “Culhane Leads Valiant Fight - State Senator Opposed Plan From Start; Organized Wide Opposition.” On the morning of the referendum, the Democrat ran a front-page photograph of Culhane voting. The headline read, “Registering his ‘No.’ ”

¹². The Waterbury Democrat, late October and early November issues, on microfilm at Silas Bronson Library. See also Monti (2011).

¹³. Tensions between immigrants from Southern and Eastern Europe and Irish-dominated party organizations were common in Northeastern cities. See Erie (1988), especially Chapter 4, Sheter (1986), and Gamm (1989).

¹⁴. The Waterbury Republican and Waterbury American, late October and early November issues, on microfilm at the Silas Bronson Library.
Figure 2.4: Waterbury’s party-line rejection of STV (observations are precincts).

Figure 2.4 gives precinct-level charter support on October 3 by support for the Republican mayoral candidate a month later. Unfortunately there are no proximate, pre-referendum indicators of precinct-level city partisanship. A 2005 flood at city hall destroyed most of the Hayes-era records. Yet it is reasonable to believe the October 3 electorate was the same as that in the mayoral election. Waterbury then held local

elections a week after the November general. The off-cycle character of both votes means turnout would have been limited to the most attentive voters (Anzia 2014).

The fit between Republican vote share and referendum support is striking ($\beta = 1.28, \sigma = 0.1$). Again, tokens reflect the actual data, and the diagonal segment is the least-squares best fit.

In maintaining the allegiance of the Culhane faction, Waterbury Democrats averted a party split, defeating STV. Waterbury (1939) therefore conforms to the path (a) prediction: same cohesive majority, no rules-change.

2.4.3 STV win: Worcester’s 1947 vote

No such last-minute coordination prevented the 1947 STV win in Worcester (MA). Republicans and defecting Democrats in the mid-1940s formed a neighborhood group opposing Democratic Mayor Charles F. Jeff Sullivan (Binstock 1960:II-1). It later became the Citizens’ Plan E Association (CEA), which led the effort for an STV charter.\(^{16}\) Though members claimed that “there is no Democratic or Republican way to pave a street,” partisan concerns were not far off. Some in the CEA complained that Republican voters were too dispersed among the city’s ten three-seat wards to win office in proportion to their numbers (Edwards 1972:3), and the group used GOP cars and headquarters in the 1947 referendum campaign.\(^{17}\) Worcester’s charter passed with bipartisan support by nearly two-to-one.

Figure 2.5 gives support for Worcester’s PR charter by support for the Republican mayoral candidate at the same election. The thinner line represents the fit we would observe if the Republican vote predicted the referendum vote in one-to-one fashion.

\(^{16}\) Plan E was the state-authorized charter format including STV.

\(^{17}\) See clippings titled “Daley Resignation Leaves Plan E Group Undisturbed” and “Plan E Committee Votes Expansion; Two Break Away,” circa 1948, in the Plan E/CEA Collection, unsorted, at the Worcester Historical Museum.
and the heavier line represents the best fit from an ordinary least squares regression. The distances between corresponding points on the lines indicate that a substantial number of voters supported both charter change and the Democratic mayoral candidate. Data points are given by corresponding ward numbers so that results can be compared to the ward descriptions in Binstock (1960) below.

![Diagram showing the relationship between charter support and mayoral vote support.]

Figure 2.5: Worcester’s Republican/defecting Democratic STV adoption (observations are precincts).

The ward-by-ward results are consistent with typical patterns of ethnic and socioeconomic strain on machine-style party organization. Binstock’s (1960: I-23) descriptions of Worcester’s wards contextualize the data. Wards 3, 4, 6, 7, and 9 were ethnically diverse but traditionally represented by Irish-Americans. Erie (1988) tells us
that non-Irish immigrants became restive machine opponents as patronage dried up in cities like New York and Boston. Ward 5 was Worcester’s manufacturing core, so its middling reform support and party disunity are unsurprising. Wards 1 and 10 were Republican strongholds, so their interest in ousting the Democratic administration is predictable.

Ward 8 had a special role in the STV fight. This was the seat of Clark University. Jones-D’Agostino (2004) reports that Clark and Worcester Polytechnic administrators were leaders in the campaign. The CEA Board’s minutes for 1947 also refer to presentations by Morris Cohen, a Clark University political scientist who advised the group on its STV campaign.18

Overall, the locations of each precinct-by-ward in figure 2.5 are consistent with a model in which most of the out-party (Republicans) joins forces with a faction of the ruling party (Democrats).

2.4.4 ECOLOGICAL INFERENCE (EI)

As a robustness check on the preceding vignettes, table 2.3 presents EI estimates of party support for charter change in each of the three New England cases. I use the state-of-the-art approach in ecological inference: a Bayesian multinomial-Dirichlet model (Rosen et al. 2001; King 1997; Lau et al. 2007). The data include actual row and column frequencies, not proportions, and I include votes for “none” when available. For each model, I use default priors, 250,000 iterations, a burn-in of 100,000 iterations, and a thinning interval of 10. Convergence diagnostics are available on request.

Along path (b), or reform by cohesive majority, charter change should have overwhelming support from the prior out-party. At the end of path (c), or reform by

18. See handwritten minutes of the CEA Board of Directors for 1947 in the Plan E/Proportional Representation Collection (unsorted), Worcester Historical Museum.
fragmented majority, there should be substantial support from both the prior ruling party and nearly all of the out-party(ies).

In sum, we should see little former incumbent party support when STV fails (Waterbury) and when the charter includes at-large plurality (Brockton). We should see much more former incumbent party support for winning charters with STV (Worcester). Finally, we should see high rates of out-party support in all three cases. EI estimates in table 2.3 meet these expectations. Table entries are means and standard deviations from posterior distributions. Out-party voters overwhelmingly supported charter change in each city. Yet only in Worcester, which actually adopted STV, did a large share of former majority party voters support change: an estimated 40 percent.

2.5 WITHIN-CITY EVIDENCE: NOMINATION CONFLICT

Why did Worcester’s Democratic Party factionalize while Waterbury’s did not? One possibility is that a cohesive opposition existed within the party, which failed to make inroads at the 1947 elections. Results from the 1947 Democratic primary elections in Worcester support this possibility.

Intra-party opposition can be more or less serious, more or less threatening. When opposition is not organized, we might expect many candidates to enter a primary race. When opposition is weak, the party’s favorite wins a vast majority of primary votes. A third possibility is that opposition is geographically concentrated, so that the party’s favorite dominates some contests while the opposition dominates others. One way to capture these possibilities is to use the fractionalization index from Rae (1968). Fractionalization ($F$) equals one minus the sum of squared candidate vote shares. It
represents the probability that two randomly chosen primary voters from the same precinct voted for different Democratic candidates.

When two factions are evenly matched in a primary, $F$ will be right around 0.5. Values much less than 0.5 indicate that more than two candidates have divided the primary vote more or less evenly. This suggests disorganization. Values much greater than 0.5 suggest one faction was dominant. Finally, values of zero are only possible with uncontested primaries.

Figure 2.6 gives precinct-level support for the STV charter in November by fractionalization of the Democratic aldermanic primary vote one month earlier. Again, data points are given by corresponding ward numbers so that results can be compared to the ward descriptions in Binstock (1960). The line of best fit is based on a linear regression including only those precincts that saw contested primaries ($\beta = 0.18$, $\sigma = 0.1$). Charter support is highest in two kinds of precincts: uncontested, then those with the most evenly contested primaries. Wards 1, 2, 8, and 10 saw uncontested aldermanic primaries. According to Binstock (1960), 1 and 10 were the wealthiest wards, traditionally represented by Republicans. Ward 9 also stands out. This is where the incumbent Democratic faction faced its most serious challenge. Wards 1, 9, and 10 were unsurprisingly supportive of the PR charter one month later.

Waterbury may have been different because would-be defectors retained hope of political influence. By the time of the mid-October referendum, the Culhane faction of its Democratic Party had not yet decisively lost. First, the timing of primaries may have made the difference. Worcester’s potential defectors knew the nominees before going into the November referendum. In Waterbury, by contrast, the nomination contest was ongoing. Second, Worcester’s primaries re-nominated Sullivan, an unpopular incumbent mayor. In Waterbury, the Hayes administration was on its way to jail, and there was no question that the new personnel would be different.
Ruling party disunity and support for the STV charter in Worcester (MA), 1947

B=0.18 (0.1), R2=0.06. Obs.: only precincts with Dem. F > 0. Nos. are wards.

Dem. Aldermanic primary vote fractionalization, Oct. 1947

What about Brockton? Its journal of record, the Enterprise, contains no evidence of Republican disunity on the question of charter reform. Nor was there evidence of nomination conflict. The paper did report primary and caucus results in earlier cycles, but it included no such coverage in advance of this cycle. All this suggests there were not any prominent nomination conflicts nor any detectable intra-party opposition to Brockton’s new charter.
2.6 Likelihood of defector-minority collusion elsewhere

Section 2.3 showed that 15 of 19 documented STV adoptions involved collusion between incumbent-party defectors and local minority parties. Sections 2.4 and 2.5 showed how party splits might determine the fate of STV referenda. They also showed how an at-large plurality adoption had little involvement from the main opposing party. Making these points depended on interpreting large amounts of newspaper coverage and processing difficult-to-get election results. This section looks for circumstantial evidence of party splits in a wider universe of cases.

2.6.1 Charter change episodes and county partisanship

If defector-minority collusion is the usual path to STV, successful charter change episodes should reflect the following patterns:

1. Reform episodes should not vary randomly with the partisan competitiveness of the respective jurisdiction. If they do, some factor other than party explains the preference for PR over at-large plurality.

2. No city should adopt PR where one party is hegemonic. One-party jurisdictions lack the additional parties to give rise to a pro-PR coalition.

3. PR adoption should be weakly related to partisan competitiveness. Multiple parties are necessary for PR adoption, but their presence does not guarantee one will split. Two outcomes are possible in multi-party jurisdictions: at-large plurality to the advantage of a single party (e.g., following Brockton) and PR to the advantage of a multi-party alliance of convenience (e.g., following Worcester).

To explore the party parity hypotheses, I sample all council-manager adoption episodes, 1900-1950, in cities ever among the 100 largest during the 20\textsuperscript{th} century.
This follows the approach of Trounstine (2008). The list of episodes comes from annual editions of the *Municipal Year Book*, 1934-50, by way of Choi et al. (2013). Cities that repealed council-manager charters prior to 1934, though, do not appear in those volumes. To identify these cases, I consult the *City Manager Yearbook* (1921 and 1922) and quarterly *Proportional Representation Review* (1893-1932). The *Municipal Year Book* and its predecessors document the dates that new charters took effect, but these were often a year or more after adoption. To determine adoption dates, I searched newspapers, case histories, and trade journals on Google Scholar, Google Books, and Google News. I could not find dates for nine episodes. For these cases, I subtracted two years from the charter effective date to construct a plausible adoption year. The sample comprises 61 charter reform episodes, nine of which resulted in STV.

I measure partisanship from county-level gubernatorial returns because results from a large number of cities’ historic elections are prohibitively difficult to collect (Marschall et al. 2011). The same is true of city-level results to state and national elections. Readily available are county-level returns to presidential and gubernatorial elections. I assume that city partisanship roughly tracks gubernatorial partisanship. This assumption rests on Gimpel (1996) and studies documenting links between state and local parties (Erie 1988; Trounstine 2008; Golway 2014).

Figure 2.7 gives the distance from gubernatorial two-party parity for all charter reform episodes in the sample. The axes represent the Republican and Democratic proportions, respectively, of the county-level gubernatorial vote immediately preceding a charter referendum. The data come from Walter Dean Burnham (Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research 1999). I lag gubernatorial partisanship in order to reduce concerns about reverse causation. Selecting an appropriate lag required determining exactly when each charter referendum occurred. When I
could not find this date, I subtracted two years from the charter effective date. The northeast-southwest diagonal represents the expected relationship between these vote shares if the parties were at parity. The northwest-southeast diagonal is where a city would appear if no minor party polled votes. “Jittered” means a random perturbation has been added to both values for the respective data point in order to minimize overlap in the plot. Filled points reflect PR adoption.

Figure 2.7: Electoral rule outcomes for all 61 big-city charter reform episodes, 1900-50, by county partisanship.

19. For the California gubernatorial election of 1918, I manually recoded one independent and one fusion candidacy as Democratic and Republican, respectively. The independent was Theodore Arlington Bell, a Democratic candidate in 1906, 1910, and 1918. The fusion candidacy appeared on the ballot as Republican, Prohibition, and Progressive. No other Democratic, Republican, Prohibition, or Progressive lines appeared on that ballot.

20. This perturbation is not greater than one-fifth of the smallest distance between adjacent data points on a given dimension.
Patterns in the plot are consistent with the expectations above. First, PR and non-PR outcomes are not randomly distributed. No city adopts PR with a two-party division more lopsided than 60-40. This suggests that party was a motivating factor. Second, no city adopts PR where one party is hegemonic (top-left and bottom-right). Hegemonic-party jurisdictions could not supply the multiple parties needed for a pro-PR coalition. Third, competitiveness does not guarantee PR adoption. We see both PR and non-PR cases in the center of the plot, for example, where Republicans and Democrats are at parity. We can therefore infer that party splits separate most PR and non-PR cases in these balanced, two-party jurisdictions. I make one more indirect test below.

2.6.2 Oversized reform coalitions

If PR cities were divided in their partisanship, and if successful coalitions for PR usually included most of one party and a faction of the other, we would expect lopsided outcomes when it won at referendum. Figure 2.8 presents box-and-whisker plots of the proportion of voters supporting PR in winning and losing referenda. There were 59 such referenda from 1900 to 1956, with vote shares available for 50. Consistent with a split-driven model of PR choice, coalitions were larger when referenda passed. In other words, PR seldom won in other than a landslide.

2.7 What split the ruling parties?

The substantive motives for incumbent-party splits are obviously interesting and potentially relevant to contemporary politics. A distillation of case histories makes it possible to state some research directions.

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The desire of organized labor for independent bargaining power on city councils is one big candidate. Unions supported PR in four of five Ohio cities: Ashtabula (1915), Cleveland (1921), Cincinnati (1924), and Hamilton (1926) (Busch 1995:91; Barber 1995a:122; Kolesar 1995:168; Weaver and Blount 1995:214). Only in Toledo did unions oppose PR, and that was on a basis of opposition to at-large elections of any type (Anderson 1995:244). Organized labor figured prominently into the 1936 New York City adoption, here under the guise of the Roosevelt-supported Labor Party (McCaffrey 1939; Prosterman 2013). Non-Federation unions also supported PR in
Worcester.\textsuperscript{22} The negative case of Waterbury reinforces these observations. Monti (2011:172-3) finds that labor leaders threatened to back PR there in 1939, in order to extract concessions from the local Democratic Party. That some unions wanted to play kingmaker in local politics is not surprising. Labor leaders could be found in both parties in the early part of the 20\textsuperscript{th} century, and their incorporation into the Democratic Party only really \textit{began} in the late 1930s (Schlozman 2015).

Racial and ethnic diversity also appear to have intersected with class in ways that split some local parties. In Cincinnati, for example, poorer African Americans remained loyal Republicans in the 1924 PR referendum, but the local black newspaper and the Universal Negro Improvement Association did not. Robert A. Burnham (1997) finds evidence that African Americans who supported PR also opposed what they saw as a patronizing relationship to the local Republican organization. Some Jewish Republicans were prominent PR supporters both here and in Cleveland (Barber 1995a:148-9). At least some white-collar Jewish identifiers played a similar role two decades later in Worcester (MA), breaking with a predominantly Irish-American and working-class Democratic Party (Banfield and Wilson 1966:97; Binstock 1960:II-41).\textsuperscript{23}

We also have evidence that social scientists and college students were PR supporters in some cities. The study of Worcester above named Morris Cohen, a Clark University political scientist heavily involved in the adoption campaign. In Cambridge (MA), Harvard Law School Dean and prominent New Deal Democrat James M. Landis chaired an adoption campaign to oust the regular Democratic administration.\textsuperscript{24} Finally, the gift of the 1934 University of Toledo graduating class was sup-


\textsuperscript{23}My own fieldwork turned up living memories of anti-semitism in the mid-century Democratic Party. One example involved a regular Democratic council member taunting a Jewish CEA member who changed his surname from “Cohen” to “Casdin.”

port for the PR campaign there, under the direction of political scientist O. Garfield Jones.25

The women’s movement was a frequent PR supporter. Barber (1995b) and co-authors give evidence of their role in four of five Ohio PR cities. The League of Women Voters in New York City and female members of the City Charter Committee in Cincinnati both earn mention for get-out-the-vote work in advance of the respective referenda (McCaffrey 1939; Kolesar 1995; Burnham 1997).

Finally, state governments often represented a brake on PR adoptions. The willingness of Connecticut to tolerate PR in its cities varied with conditions in its legislature. This body permitted the Waterbury referendum in 1939, but in 1923, it outlawed West Hartford’s use of PR. Courts were another factor. We likely would have seen more PR in California and Michigan if courts had not banned it in test cases.26

2.8 CONCLUSION

Who was behind the adoption of PR? In the vast majority of cases, incumbent-party defectors made common cause with local minority parties. They did so in order to gain access to power.

My main forms of evidence are information on parties from existing historiography, comparison of three similar cities with different reform outcomes, aggregate partisanship on all big-city reform episodes from 1900-50, and vote shares in all referenda held on PR up to 1956.

PR was not a randomly distributed reform outcome, chosen wherever the idea “caught on” with the local “Progressive reformers.” It was a product of partisan machination. Everywhere in the United States for half a century, the National Municipal

26. These cases involved Sacramento and Kalamazoo (Weaver 1986:141).
League told cities to include PR in council-manager charters. The vast majority chose plurality at-large. In cities that did not, there was substantively more than one party. Ruling parties factionalized irreparably in 17 of these cities. In 15 of them, defecting factions made common cause with one or more minority parties.
Table 2.1: How authors identify the party affiliations of pro-change elites for the 24 cities that adopted STV.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City</th>
<th>State</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Incumbent party</th>
<th>Elite STV supporters</th>
<th>Source(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kalamazoo</td>
<td>MI</td>
<td>1918</td>
<td>Rep</td>
<td>some Rep, Socialist</td>
<td>Hatton (1918) and Sealander (1988)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boulder</td>
<td>CO</td>
<td>1917</td>
<td>Rep</td>
<td>None named</td>
<td>Winter (1982)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Hartford</td>
<td>CT</td>
<td>1920</td>
<td>Rep</td>
<td>None named</td>
<td>Gallup (1921)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sacramento</td>
<td>CA</td>
<td>1920</td>
<td>None named</td>
<td>None named</td>
<td>Engler (1921)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cleveland</td>
<td>OH</td>
<td>1921</td>
<td>Rep</td>
<td>some Rep, Dem</td>
<td>Barber (1995a: 118-9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cincinnati</td>
<td>OH</td>
<td>1924</td>
<td>Rep</td>
<td>some Rep, Dem</td>
<td>Seasongood (1933) and Reed et al. (1957)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wheeling</td>
<td>WV</td>
<td>1935</td>
<td>Rep</td>
<td>some Rep, Dem</td>
<td>Hallett (1935)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norris</td>
<td>TN</td>
<td>1936</td>
<td>None named</td>
<td>None named</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Long Beach</td>
<td>NY</td>
<td>1943</td>
<td>Dem</td>
<td>some Dem, Rep</td>
<td>Miller (2007)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marshfield</td>
<td>OR</td>
<td>1944</td>
<td>None named</td>
<td>None named</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saugus</td>
<td>MA</td>
<td>1947</td>
<td>Rep</td>
<td>some Rep</td>
<td>Saugus adopts (1947), Saugus elects (1948)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worcester</td>
<td>MA</td>
<td>1947</td>
<td>Dem</td>
<td>some Dem, Rep</td>
<td>Binstock (1960) and Edwards (1972)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medford</td>
<td>MA</td>
<td>1947</td>
<td>Rep</td>
<td>some Rep, Dem</td>
<td>Dobrusin (1955:139-41)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revere</td>
<td>MA</td>
<td>1947</td>
<td>Rep</td>
<td>some Rep</td>
<td>Dobrusin (1955:118-9)</td>
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<td>Hopkins</td>
<td>MN</td>
<td>1947</td>
<td>None named</td>
<td>None named</td>
<td>Vesely (1970)</td>
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<td>Oak Ridge</td>
<td>TN</td>
<td>1948</td>
<td>None named</td>
<td>None named</td>
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Table 2.2: Background characteristics of three southern New England cities with mid-century charter referenda.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Brockton (MA)</th>
<th>Worcester (MA)</th>
<th>Waterbury (CT)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reform outcome</td>
<td>At-large plurality (path B)</td>
<td>PR win (path C)</td>
<td>PR failure (path A)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Referendum year</td>
<td>1955</td>
<td>1947</td>
<td>1939</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prior partisan control</td>
<td>Democratic</td>
<td>Democratic</td>
<td>Democratic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Had direct primaries at time of referendum</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population</td>
<td>62,860</td>
<td>203,486</td>
<td>99,314</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent black</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
<td>1.1%</td>
<td>2.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent of population employed</td>
<td>40.6%</td>
<td>38.8%</td>
<td>41.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent manufacturing production workers</td>
<td>32.6%</td>
<td>48.0%</td>
<td>47.1%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Percent retail workers</td>
<td>16.7%</td>
<td>17.4%</td>
<td>11.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manufacturing establishments per capita</td>
<td>0.035</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>0.002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occupied housing units per capita</td>
<td>0.304</td>
<td>0.270</td>
<td>0.256</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average monthly rent</td>
<td>$26.82</td>
<td>$30.97</td>
<td>$28.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case type</td>
<td>Case name</td>
<td>Ruling party</td>
<td>Est. support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Path (c): STV win</td>
<td>Worcester, MA (1947)</td>
<td>Democratic</td>
<td>0.40 (0.04)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Path (b): A-L plurality win</td>
<td>Brockton, MA (1955)</td>
<td>Democratic</td>
<td>0.14 (0.06)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Path (a): STV loss</td>
<td>Waterbury, CT (1939)</td>
<td>Democratic</td>
<td>0.08 (0.04)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2.3: Ecological inference estimates of charter support by revealed partisanship.
CHAPTER 3

VOTE TRANSFERS, PARTY ENDORSEMENTS, AND LEGISLATIVE DISCIPLINE

I argued in Chapter 2 that incumbent-party defectors and local minority parties coordinated to enact PR because both wanted access to power. I further suggested that defectors had an incentive to prefer open-endorsement STV because, relative to other forms of then-existing PR, it might have minimized party organizations’ control of their election prospects. The “free list” system would have put parties in charge of lists. The Gove system would have allowed candidates to make lists whose orderings a voter could not disturb. STV combined the most lax features of each. Each voter effectively could submit their own list. When combined with nomination by petition, a virtually party-free election can result. One therefore may worry that PR councils suffered from party indiscipline.

I search for evidence consistent with an STV-based weakening of party loyalty. My data are various indices of party cohesion measured at the ends of legislative terms, then various indices of electoral behavior preceding each of those terms. All the data come from previously paper-bound roll-call and electoral records. They cover 20 elections, 20 council terms, 688 candidacies, 180 victors (including party and party-factional affiliations in non-partisan elections), and 535 rounds of STV vote-counting.

I focus on Worcester and Cincinnati because their use of single electoral districts makes these tests possible. Is party success in directing vote transfers associated with varying levels of party discipline? Does the cross-party flow of vote transfers predict variation in discipline? What about measures of intra-party electoral competition?
We will see that transfers do not matter, but intra-party competition is associated with dips in party loyalty.

The data in this chapter cover two sets of parties or factions. For Cincinnati, we are interested in regular Republicans, Charter Republicans, and regular Democrats. Charter Republicans and regular Democrats presented common slates under the guise of the Charter Party. For Worcester, the factions are regular Democrats, CEA Democrats, and regular Republicans. Regular Republicans and CEA Democrats presented a common slate at each election: the CEA slate (Citizens’ Plan E Association).

3.1 Electoral systems, the single transferable vote, and party discipline

The connection between electoral systems and party discipline seems intuitive. Conventional wisdom says candidate-based rules depress party unity. In party-based electoral systems, party leaders – whoever they are – ration access to office, and winners are expected to toe the party line. No such sanction exists when voters choose among candidates. The classic paper in this vein comes from Carey and Shugart (1995).

But Carey and Shugart (1995) never argued that candidate-based voting rules should wreck party discipline. They argued that a candidate under candidate-based rules had “incentives to cultivate a personal vote,” or make “particularistic” promises in order to win office. To say that promises determine legislative behavior is one leap. To say that promises will diverge from party priorities is another. It also may be that patronage defines a party. Ken Carty (1981:140) concludes as much in his analysis of Irish politics under STV. Clientelism was the party system’s organizing principle, at least in the early 1980s:
Voters are organized and mobilized by local notables on the basis of the most parochial transactional relationships, yet it is not a politics of notables. The local patron and machine boss is not free to take his support across party lines, nor do his political behaviour and/or his personal qualities have much of an impact on the partisan distribution of the vote.

Yet the vote-transfer feature of STV may be a unique impediment to party control. STV allows a candidate from Party A to win on “transfer votes” from one or more Party B candidates. The idea is that cross-party electoral coordination will spill into a legislature.\(^1\) Sinnott (1999:117) nonetheless reports high rates of discipline in Ireland, which has used STV since 1921. That would be consistent with cross-party preference flows if the latter reflect coordination to produce certain coalition governments (Gallagher 2011:63).\(^2\) Since American PR councils could not be dissolved in response to coalition disloyalty, the analogue would be an effort to produce certain bill-level outcomes. Party A sends votes to select Party B candidates in return for support on key legislation. Similarly, Party B may fail to prevent this behavior by Party A. Without coalition government, and if transfers anticipate log-rolls, STV transfers may depress party discipline.

A second potential brake on party control is the ability for very popular candidates to win without transfers at all. In other words, candidates who do not win with their party’s support may not feel obligated to caucus with that party.

---

1. Australia solves this problem by giving voters the option to ratify party-given preference orderings. The vast majority take it, which effectively turns STV elections to the Australian Senate into closed-list PR contests. Malta has no such option, but for whatever reason, ticket-splitting is rare (Farrell and Katz 2014:15).

2. Other cross-party flows may reflect expressive voting for, say, hopeless Party A in expectation those votes will help elect hopeful Party B anyway (Farrell and McAllister 2006:13).
3.2 Hypotheses

3.2.1 Party direction of voters’ rankings

Winners for whom ballot transfers constitute a large proportion of final-round vote totals are heavily transfer-dependent. If many of these ballots come from co-partisans, we might expect the winner to exhibit greater party loyalty, since they depend on co-partisans for election. If many ballots come from non-co-partisans, we might expect less party loyalty, since the winner’s “constituency” includes voters from other parties.

Table 3.1: How transfer dependence and the source of those transfers may interact to affect party loyalty.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Transfer dependence</th>
<th>High proportion of transfers from:</th>
<th>Non-co-partisans</th>
<th>Co-partisans</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>Low loyalty</td>
<td>High loyalty</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>No prediction</td>
<td>No prediction</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**H1.A** Among the most transfer-dependent winners, candidates for whom non-co-partisan transfers are arbitrarily large proportions of final vote totals should exhibit lower party loyalty than candidates less dependent on non-co-partisan transfers.

**H1.B** Among the most transfer-dependent winners, candidate for whom co-partisan transfers are arbitrarily large proportions of final vote totals should exhibit higher party loyalty than those for whom co-partisan transfers are not.

3.2.2 Internal leadership challenges

Table 1 shows it is not clear what to expect from winners who are not transfer-dependent. These are candidates with first-round vote totals arbitrarily far in excess of
the Droop quota \((Q, \text{equation } 1.1)\). They may be especially popular within their parties, making them party leaders and therefore more loyal than average. Or they may be contenders for legislative party leadership, making them less loyal than average. If they are leadership contenders, they may induce legislative-party splits, driving down many co-partisans’ party loyalty scores.

There is no conclusive, data-driven way to know the identity of a “contender for party leadership,” but first-round vote totals give suggestive evidence. If two or more candidates from the same party exhibit vote totals far in excess of co-partisans’ vote totals, we might assume they contended for leadership. Then, assuming leadership challenges only matter if the contenders secure positions (e.g., the challenger is not defeated), we can measure leadership challenges from the dispersion of the party’s winners’ first-round vote totals. If this affects overall party discipline, it will manifest not in any one candidate’s party loyalty, but in the aggregate cohesion of the party.

**H2** Aggregate party cohesion varies with the dispersion of first-preference support for that party’s winners.

Tables 2 and 3 show how first-round vote dispersion among winners might capture a leadership challenge. Table 2 gives winners’ first-round vote totals for the non-contentious Cincinnati election of 1929. A Droop quota in this election was 13,877. The vote total for one candidate far surpasses the total of any other candidate: eventual Mayor and Charter-Republican Russell Wilson (WilsonR). As long as we focus on the Charter coalition or Charter-Republicans within it, the votes are relatively concentrated on Wilson. He is the clear leader.\(^5\)

---

3. I say “arbitrarily” because no candidate knows what \(Q\) will be until after votes are counted.
5. Focusing on Democrats, however, it is not clear who leads that faction.
Table 3.2: Cincinnati, 1929. First-round vote totals for winners in a non-contentious STV election.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Candidate</th>
<th>Party</th>
<th>Round 1</th>
<th>% of quota</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wilson</td>
<td>C-r</td>
<td>22,112</td>
<td>159</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Druffel</td>
<td>C-d</td>
<td>10,622</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rose</td>
<td>C-r</td>
<td>10,394</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matthews</td>
<td>C-d</td>
<td>10,308</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imbus</td>
<td>C-d</td>
<td>9,706</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woeste</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>9,082</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yeatman</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>8,668</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patterson</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>6,715</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pollak</td>
<td>C-r</td>
<td>5,357</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Now contrast Table 2 with Table 3, the vote totals for winners in the contentious election of 1955. (A Droop quota was 14,319.) There are two clear Democratic Party frontrunners. One is Ted Berry, President of the local National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. The second is long-time Mayor Ed Waldvogel, a New Deal Democrat who selectively worked with Republicans on urban redevelopment in the 1940s. Redevelopment later put Berry and Waldvogel in conflict (Gray 1959:V-5). When the two entered council that December, in fact, the Charter coalition broke tradition by electing Waldvogel mayor, an honor that typically went to the lead vote-getter in Charter. Table 3 consequently gives vote totals more dispersed than those in Table 2.

Note that if H2 is true – that leadership challenges by candidates who do not depend on vote transfers account for diminutions in party loyalty – we have reason to doubt both forms of H1. If popular insurgents are splitting their parties, and if transfer-dependent winners are receiving large proportions of transfers from insurgent
Table 3.3: Cincinnati, 1955. First-round vote totals for winners in a contentious STV election.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Candidate</th>
<th>Party</th>
<th>Round 1</th>
<th>% of quota</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rich</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>25,062</td>
<td>175</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Berry</td>
<td>C-d</td>
<td>14,831</td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waldvogel</td>
<td>C-d</td>
<td>13,678</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kelly</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>11,643</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jordan</td>
<td>C-d</td>
<td>10,290</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clancy</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>10,037</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gilligan</td>
<td>C-d</td>
<td>8,085</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachrach</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>7,683</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dolbey</td>
<td>C-r</td>
<td>6,843</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

coopartisans, winners dependent on co-partisan transfers may manifest low levels of loyalty. The top-right cell in Table 1 takes on a value of “No prediction.”

3.2.3 Transfers from leadership challengers

To look for the effect of vote transfers in one final place, I focus on the voting records of those who did receive transfers from very popular candidates we might cast as leadership challengers (e.g., Berry in table 3.3). Perhaps winners are trading votes in return for policy support from another party’s transfer-dependent legislators. If this is the result of STV, it will be due to what the literature calls “preference swapping.” Though this can occur among parties (Reilly 2001), the relevant type of swapping is between candidates of different parties (Reilly 1997; Horowitz 2003). If this weakens party discipline, it should manifest at the level of legislator dyads. In particular:

**H3** Different-party legislator pairs who share arbitrarily large proportions of vote transfers should vote the same way more often than different-party legislator pairs who do not share vote transfers.

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3.3 Data

I use the Cincinnati and Worcester components of the Municipal STV Data Set, a newly digitized collection covering elections and the subsequent legislative terms in Cincinnati (1929-57); New York City (1937-47); and Worcester, Mass. (1949-61). The Cincinnati and Worcester components comprise 20 elections, 20 council terms, 688 candidacies, 180 victors (including party and party-factional affiliations in non-partisan elections), and 535 rounds of STV vote-counting.\(^6\)

Figures 3.1 and 3.2 give party cohesion for each party in both cities over the span of its STV use. The measure is a Rice (1924) cohesion score, a standard way to measure party loyalty. Scores are averaged across all roll-call votes in a given term for a given party faction. Unanimous roll calls are omitted. The Rice score \((R)\) for a single roll call in which party \(p\) casts \(Y\) yea votes and \(N\) nay votes is:

\[
R_p = \frac{|Y_p - N_p|}{Y_p + N_p} \tag{3.1}
\]

3.4 Tests

I test each hypothesis above for both parties and pre-election coalitions. Were Charter and the CEA parties in their own right, such that their founders meant them to vote as blocks in council (Schwartz 1989; Aldrich 1995)? Or were they devices for keeping STV transfers away from the respective city’s formerly incumbent party (Laver 2000)?

---

\(^6\) Cincinnati roll-call votes are from *The City Bulletin: Official Publication of the City of Cincinnati*. Worcester roll calls are photographed and entered from original minutes, on file at Worcester City Hall. Party and party-factional affiliation data for Cincinnati come from *Results of Elections in Hamilton County*, supplemented by biennial, pre-election issues of the *Cincinnati Enquirer*. Party data for Worcester are from biennial, pre-election issues of the *Worcester Telegram*, supplemented by voter registration index cards on file at the Worcester Election Commission. All photographs are on file with the author.
If Charter and CEA were parties in their own right, any of the above relationships should be observable at the coalition level. If these coalitions were mere containers for functionally separate parties, however, any relationships should manifest at the party level.

3.4.1 Results: party direction of transfers

I begin with H1.A and H1.B: that among the most transfer-dependent winners, candidates for whom (non-)co-partisan transfers are arbitrarily large proportions of final vote totals should exhibit higher (lower) party loyalty than those for whom (non-)co-partisan transfers are not. All results are null.

Party loyalty here is calculated as the proportion of times that a legislator votes with a majority of their party or pre-election coalition.

Co-partisan transfers are defined as the proportion of a winner’s final vote total that comes from co-partisan candidates. I calculate two proportions: that coming from members of the same faction, then that coming from members of the same pre-election coalition.

I condition co-partisan transfers on transfer dependence, which is the proportion of winner’s final-round vote total not obtained via first-preference votes. If the source of transfers affects party or coalitional loyalty, all three coefficients should be statistically significant and in the expected direction: proportion of the final vote total from inside (positive) or outside (negative) the party or coalition, transfer dependence (positive or negative as appropriate), and the interaction term (positive or negative as appropriate).

7. Winners whose first-round vote totals exceeded a Droop quota receive a zero value because they are not at all transfer-dependent.
Table 4 presents the results. I find little support for a relationship between the source of a winner’s vote transfers and their factional or coalitional loyalty over the ensuing term.

3.4.2 Results: Leadership Challenges

This section tests H2: that indications of a leadership challenge at elections are associated with less-than-average party cohesion in the ensuing legislative term. The relevant coefficient is statistically significant and signed as expected in party models.

The dependent variable is a Rice cohesion score (Eq. 2) calculated at the faction and coalition levels. The predictor of interest is a Herfindahl-Hirschman concentration index \( H \) of the winners’ vote shares, calculated at the party and coalition levels (Hirschman 1964). The concentration index ranges from zero to one in theory, then from 0.2 to 0.8 in my sample, with higher values indicating greater concentration. Given the vote proportions \( V \) among winners \( \{1, 2, ..., N\} \) from party \( p \):

\[
H_p = \sum_{1}^{N} V^2
\]  

I drop any observation for a party or coalition of one member. These would bias the result because party unity and vote concentration for any such faction both equal one.

Table 5 presents the results of four regressions: two each for factions and coalitions, one of each pair with random effects for city-terms.\(^8\) Winner vote-share concentration for factions is significant with the expected direction in both specifications. Figure 2 gives the data, regression line from the party model without random effects, and

\(^8\) Similar results emerge from separate regressions for each city, with and without fixed effects for terms. The sample size for a Worcester party regression with fixed effects is 12, and the coefficient 0.69 (0.18) is significant with greater than 97 percent confidence.
Table 3.4: OLS regression results for legislator-level tests.\(^a\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Factions</th>
<th>Factions</th>
<th>Coalitions</th>
<th>Coalitions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intercept</td>
<td>0.78(^{***})</td>
<td>0.80(^{***})</td>
<td>0.81(^{***})</td>
<td>0.81(^{***})</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.04)</td>
<td>(0.04)</td>
<td>(0.04)</td>
<td>(0.04)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transfer dependence</td>
<td>0.13</td>
<td>-0.01</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>-0.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.10)</td>
<td>(0.10)</td>
<td>(0.10)</td>
<td>(0.10)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prop. of final round from inside</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>-0.09</td>
<td>(0.31)</td>
<td>(0.30)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dependence*From inside</td>
<td>-0.24</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.58)</td>
<td>(0.57)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prop. of final round from outside</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>0.08</td>
<td>(0.22)</td>
<td>(0.26)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dependence*From outside</td>
<td>0.15</td>
<td>-0.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.36)</td>
<td>(0.40)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AIC</td>
<td>-124.87</td>
<td>-123.90</td>
<td>-119.37</td>
<td>-118.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIC</td>
<td>-107.05</td>
<td>-106.08</td>
<td>-101.55</td>
<td>-100.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Log Likelihood</td>
<td>68.44</td>
<td>67.95</td>
<td>65.68</td>
<td>65.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Num. obs.</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>144</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Num. groups: cityTerm</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Var: cityTerm (Intercept)</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Var: Residual</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>0.02</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^{a}\) Dependent variable is party loyalty score (factional or coalitional) for legislators. All models include random effects for city-terms. Legislators who did not receive any transfers (i.e., transfer givers) are dropped. Factions = models for factional loyalty. Coalitions = models for coalitional loyalty.
bounds of a 95-percent confidence interval. All observations but parties-of-one are included.⁹

RESULTS: TRANSFERS FROM CHALLENGERS

My first set of tests showed that party and coalitional coordination in elections could not predict party loyalty in the subsequent legislative session. These tests addressed the first big mechanism by which STV might affect party discipline: entire-slate coordination of vote transfers. My second set addressed the second mechanism: that especially strong candidates might in fact be leadership rivals. This next set of tests addresses the last question: do strong candidates like these “swap preferences” for policy support across party lines?

The dependent variable is a measure of co-voting, also called an agreement score. This represents the proportion of times that two legislators vote the same way, given all roll calls for which both were present (Truman 1959; Sinclair et al. 2011).¹⁰ This means my observations are legislator dyads.

The predictor of interest is the proportion of a winner’s final vote total coming from the transfer-giving member of the legislator dyad. The idea is that legislator pairs in which one is dependent for election on the other might vote together more often than if one did not depend on the other.

Following H3, I compare only different-party legislator pairs. We want to know if transfer-sharing pairs vote together more often. An important question is: compared to what? Given the generally high levels of party loyalty in my sample (Figure 1), blindly analyzing all dyads would mask any relationship. As it turns out, relatively few

---

⁹. Vote-share concentration is not remotely significant in either coalition model. This is circumstantial evidence that parties, not pre-election coalitions thereof, were the operative actors under STV in each city.

¹⁰. I treat abstentions and absences as missing data.
Table 3.5: OLS regression results for party-level tests.\textsuperscript{a}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Parties (RE)</th>
<th>Parties</th>
<th>Coalitions (RE)</th>
<th>Coalitions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intercept</td>
<td>0.57***</td>
<td>0.57***</td>
<td>0.78***</td>
<td>0.78***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.06)</td>
<td>(0.06)</td>
<td>(0.08)</td>
<td>(0.08)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concentration of</td>
<td>0.42**</td>
<td>0.42**</td>
<td>-0.33</td>
<td>-0.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>winners’ vote shares</td>
<td>(0.14)</td>
<td>(0.14)</td>
<td>(0.26)</td>
<td>(0.26)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AIC</td>
<td>-43.70</td>
<td></td>
<td>-36.64</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIC</td>
<td>-35.59</td>
<td></td>
<td>-29.88</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Log Likelihood</td>
<td>25.85</td>
<td></td>
<td>22.32</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Num. obs.</td>
<td>56</td>
<td></td>
<td>56</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Num. groups: cityTerm</td>
<td>20</td>
<td></td>
<td>20</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Var: cityTerm (Intercept)</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Var: Residual</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R\textsuperscript{2}</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.13</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adj. R\textsuperscript{2}</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.12</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RMSE</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.14</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\textsuperscript{a} Dependent variable is Rice cohesion score for parties or pre-election coalitions. “RE” means the model includes random effects for city-terms.

\footnotesize***p < 0.001, **p < 0.01, *p < 0.05
legislators received transfers from others who were elected. This is because the vast proportion of transfers came from eliminated candidates, the effects of which I looked for in my first set of tests. If preference swapping among winners is associated with weakened party discipline, the relationship might be found in pairs of different-party legislators.

Finally, any relationship between co-voting and preference swapping in the preceding election should reflect diminishing returns to swapping. Popular candidates are likely to garner support from voters with potentially many sincere and/or strategic reasons for their rankings. Below some unknown level of preference swapping, the rate of transfer of votes from strong candidates is essentially random. At least that is how the receiver is likely to view the transfer flow. Coordination likely takes over beyond this unknown level. Once the ‘coordination effect’ kicks in, it does not matter how many votes Candidate A sent to Candidate B, just that B owes their seat to A. I include the square of the predictor to capture diminishing returns.

Table 3.6 gives the results of four regressions: two for each city, one of each pair with random effects for city-term. Although the results are significant in factional models, they run counter to expectations. Cross-party swapping is associated with less cross-party co-voting. Why?

Figure 3.4 implies that the relationship of preference swapping to co-voting is a model-dependent artifact of sparse data. The diagonal is a simple regression of co-voting on preference swapping ($\beta = 0.71, \sigma = 0.48, p = 0.14$). The result hinges on how we model the most extreme preference swappers.

The bottom line is: given these data, preference swapping predicts no more cross-party voting than whatever process causes it among different-party legislators sharing

---

11. Fitting this model with city-term fixed effects yields $\beta = 0.7, \sigma = 0.38$, significant with greater than 90 percent confidence. Fitting it with city-term random effects returns $\beta = 0.7, \sigma = 0.38, t = 1.86$. 
no transfers. Focus in Figure 3 on dyads for which roughly five percent or more of the weaker legislator’s winning vote total comes from the other legislator. Why focus on five percent? The data suggest this might be a cut-point at which transfers lose their random character. Almost all dyads above this level co-vote at rates above the sample mean, but so do many dyads sharing no transfers at all. A plot of cross-coalition co-voting gives the same basic result.

3.5 Discussion and conclusion

I have searched for a relationship between vote transfers and party discipline in several likely places. There exists no other study of this behavior in a non-parliamentary regime. I collected the relevant data for two cities that produced conventional wisdom. Then I asked two questions. Does party coordination (or its failure) in directing vote transfers increase (or decrease) party discipline? Does preference swapping between non-co-partisans predict unique rates of aisle-crossing in government? Based on these data, the answer to both questions was “no.”

Then I found evidence of a different relationship. A fact sheet by the 2005 British Columbia Citizens’ Assembly on Electoral Reform made the following statement on STV:

Candidates may see their major rival as a member of their own party rather than a member of an opposing party. As a consequence, the ability of parties to discipline their candidates is weakened (British Columbia Citizens’ Assembly on Electoral Reform 2005).

Why would a party committee grant its endorsement to someone unlikely to vote with that party in government? Two possibilities stand out.
First, candidates like these eventually would have won anyway, and bringing them into the party might have been one way to induce some loyalty.\footnote{\textsuperscript{12} Some have observed similar behavior in Israel, where the opposing Likud and Yisrael Beiteinu parties merged their lists in advance of the 2013 election. See: Matthew Shugart, “Likud and Yisrael Beiteinu,” \textit{Fruits \& Votes} (blog), January 21, 2013, \url{https://fruitsandvotes.wordpress.com/2013/01/21/likud-and-yisrael-beiteinu/}.} Cincinnati’s Ted Berry (table 3.3) fits this description. He led the local Civil Rights Movement, ran and lost as an independent in 1947, won as a Charter Republican in 1949, and continued to win as a regular Democrat from 1951 through 1955, increasing his first-round share of a quota each time.

If career paths like Berry’s were typical, we would expect undisciplined parties regularly to have endorsed high-performing losers from the last election. Figure 3.5 gives the proportions of this-election winners who lost the last election for two samples: parties in the bottom third of the Rice distribution, then parties in the top third. In terms of endorsing last-election losers at all, there is little difference between parties of low and high discipline.

A second possibility is that incumbency confers leeway to become disloyal in later terms. Consider Berry once more. Democratic discipline on his watch does not bottom out until 1953, once he had already served one full term as a Democrat. The logic behind this is simple. A candidate joins a party to get elected, cultivates a base of support in the electorate, then tends to the interests of that base rather than the demands of their party. Carson et al. (2010) note a similar dynamic among Congressional incumbents. If a party accumulates many such incumbents, it follows that party loyalty will decline.
Figure 3.1: Party unity in Cincinnati.
Figure 3.2: Party unity in Worcester.
Figure 3.3: Party Rice score by the party’s winners’ vote concentration (filled points from Worcester).
Figure 3.4: Rates of co-voting among different-party legislator dyads.
Table 3.6: OLS regression results for inter-party (“party”) and inter-coalition (“coalition”) legislator dyads.\(^a\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Intercept</td>
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<td>0.65***</td>
<td>0.61***</td>
<td>0.61***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.01)</td>
<td>(0.04)</td>
<td>(0.01)</td>
<td>(0.04)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preferences swapped as</td>
<td>3.76**</td>
<td>3.09**</td>
<td>2.65</td>
<td>2.34*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>prop. of receiver’s final vote</td>
<td>(1.37)</td>
<td>(1.06)</td>
<td>(1.67)</td>
<td>(1.17)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The above, squared</td>
<td>-21.48*</td>
<td>-16.70*</td>
<td>-25.16*</td>
<td>-22.90**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(9.02)</td>
<td>(6.97)</td>
<td>(10.81)</td>
<td>(7.54)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R(^2)</td>
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<td>0.02</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adj. R(^2)</td>
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<td>0.01</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Num. obs.</td>
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<tr>
<td>RMSE</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>AIC</td>
<td>-297.65</td>
<td>-340.25</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIC</td>
<td>-276.10</td>
<td>-319.91</td>
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<tr>
<td>Log Likelihood</td>
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<td>175.12</td>
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<td>Num. groups: cityTerm</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Var: cityTerm (Intercept)</td>
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<td>0.03</td>
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<tr>
<td>Var: Residual</td>
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<td>0.02</td>
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</table>

\(^a\) Dependent variable is co-voting, or the proportion of times that both dyad members voted the same way. “RE” models include random effects for city-terms.
Figure 3.5: Endorsements of last-election losers for parties of low and high average Rice scores.
MINORITY-PARTY COLLUSION IN THE REPEAL OF PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION

Formerly incumbent parties never liked PR, but that was not enough to end it. Successful repeal attempts often involved parties that wanted PR in the first place. This chapter accounts for three minority parties’ changing positions: those of Cincinnati Democrats, New York City Republicans, and Worcester’s “reformist” CEA Democrats (Reed et al. 1957; Zeller and Bone 1948; Prosterman 2013; Binstock 1960).

In each of the three cities, a minority party colluded with the old incumbent party to make the electoral system less permissive. Cincinnati turned to the familiar system of non-partisan, at-large plurality in a nine-seat district. Worcester replaced PR with the same, preceded by a non-partisan primary that would winnow the candidate field to 18. Both cities retained nomination by petition. New York City restored two-stage, partisan elections in single-member districts. Further in New York, the new Wilson-Pakula Act disallowed running in a party’s primary without being its registered member. Others had used that strategy in the early 1940s, notably U.S. Representatives Vito Marcantonio (ALP-NY) and Adam Clayton Powell, Jr. (ALP-NY) (Shefter 1986). Wilson-Pakula ensured minor parties would not use major-party primaries to enter city council, nor any longer for higher office.

I argue that two factors explain a minority party’s position on PR. The first is whether it finds itself in the winning policy coalition. A small party seldom controls all branches of government, but by controlling at least one veto point, it can force
its way into the winning coalition. If a party controls no veto points at all, it will be tempted to make itself larger by absorbing another party’s voters. Making the electoral system more restrictive is one way to absorb another party’s voters.

Second, a party’s relative size conditions its position on PR. When voters migrate in the post-PR world, the largest small party expects to win out, and smaller small parties expect to be swallowed. In the best case, their leaders get seats at the table of the new opposition. In the worst case, voters simply migrate, and the old leaders quit.

In addition to bringing new data to light, this chapter’s big innovation is to predict voting-system change from the legislative record itself. First I lay out a theory of party positions on PR. Then I use Bayesian ideal point estimation to determine which party is most often in the winning coalition or, to use a term of art, pivotal. The last part of this chapter discusses results: repeal attempts I predict (six), those I predict that did not happen (one), attempts I did not predict (two), and two theoretically interesting near-attempts.

My focus on minority parties’ positions does not fully explain why a referendum succeeds. My model predicts some referenda that failed by just a few hundred out of thousands of votes.

For readers wanting the short story, it is this. Cincinnati’s Charter Republicans began voting against Democrats in council, just as the Democratic Party became dominant in Charter. In Worcester, regular Democrats replaced CEA Democrats as the swing vote. Republicans lost their swing vote early on, but they supported PR because their party had shrunk. Finally, by 1947 in New York City, Republicans had lost control of every veto point: the Board of Estimate, the Mayoralty, and the City Council local law pivot (two thirds). For executive offices, the ALP began nominating
jointly with the Democrats. In council, meanwhile, Democrats and leftists increasingly voted together against Republicans.

4.1 A VETO-PLAYERS THEORY OF PARTY POSITIONS ON PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION

Scholars of electoral system change usually distinguish policy- from office-seeking motives (Benoit 2007). Policy-seeking has to do with the composition of governing coalitions. Office-seeking is about the number of seats in a legislature. A party losing on policy may think that voting-system change will help it, but such a party has to balance the risk of losing office.

One way to think about policy influence is to focus on veto points or veto players. Veto points are strategic bargaining positions in the lawmaking process. They exist from the design of a political system. Veto players emerge from a spatial model of a legislature, e.g., the 51st U.S. Senator. For simplicity’s sake, I will call institutional veto points and partisan veto players by the same name: “veto point.” Control of a veto point allows a party to demand concessions in return for consent to policy change (Tsebelis 2002). Sartori (1976:109) calls this “blackmail potential.” Analysis of parliamentary systems shows that expectations about who will have blackmail potential shape preferences about the voting system (Bawn 1993; Benoit 2004, 2007; Katz 2005; Renwick 2010).

Parliamentary systems do not exist in the United States. What defines a parliamentary system is the legislature’s ability to dismiss an executive. Even though council-manager cities resemble parliamentary systems in that councils hire and fire city managers, executive authority always rests with the councils.
In a parliamentary system, executive dependence on legislative confidence affects what bills can come to the floor. Cabinet formation in a parliamentary system commits parties to an agenda. The government exercises exclusive proposal power, and refusal to support the government agenda can trigger snap elections. Theory and evidence suggest these surprise elections commit a coalition to its legislative agenda (Huber 1996; Becher and Christiansen 2015).

In the United States, however, snap elections do not exist. That means the legislative agenda can change. Different majorities can form for different bills in the course of the same term. Figure 1 illustrates a situation that can persist for the duration of that term. There are three factions: A, B, and C. A simple majority of five votes is needed to pass legislation. No single faction has five votes. Because proposal power is not exclusive to a cabinet – there is no cabinet – the only relevant coalition is a bill-level one. The solid segment represents a vote in which B (3 votes) unites with C (2 votes) against A (4 votes). The dotted segment represents a vote in which A and B unite against C. The dashed segment represents a vote of A and C against B.

Figure 4.1: Three non-majority factions in a hypothetical, majoritarian legislature.
If $A-C$ and $B-C$ coalitions each occur more often than $A-B$ coalitions, we might characterize $C$ as pivotal, the majority pivot, or most often controlling the decisive vote. Another way to say this is that $C$ is most often in the winning coalition. It does not matter in what proportion the non-$A-B$ coalitions occur. It simply means that $C$ gets something close to what it wants on more bills than either $A$ or $B$. Assuming all factions value each bill equally, $C$ is happier than $A$ and $B$. $A$ and $B$ are therefore willing to consider changing the voting system.

4.1.1 Preferences of largest party

I assume that the largest party ($A$ above) always wants to change the rules. Any party prefers monopoly control of government to negotiated outcomes. The largest faction’s problem is operational, not one of motive. Assuming its share of the legislature accurately reflects its fiat power (Benoit 2004:374), it needs help to change the voting system.\(^1\)

4.1.2 Preferences of second-largest party

I argue that a successful effort at voting-system change involves the second-largest party ($B$ above). This non-largest group is most likely to survive the post-PR environment because voters opposed to the largest party should switch their support to it. If the second-largest party does not control the decisive vote, it should support repeal in an effort to boost its size and gain that vote.

Why should the survivor be the second-largest party? This group is most likely to benefit from strategic voting, or perceptions that other small factions are hopeless.

---

\(^1\) There must be some uncertainty about the destinations of former $C$ supporters. The largest party should not agree to repeal PR if it expects all opposition to migrate to a single opposition party. That would be policy-suicidal. $A$ would prefer to win on at least some bills with the help of $C$ rather than witness $C$ go into a permanent majority with $B$. 

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Ergun (2010) argues as much when he shows formally that the relative size of the second-largest party determines its support for switching to PR. The issue for Ergun is whether this party expects to form a government on its own under majoritarian rules. If it thinks it can, it will not want PR, since opposition voters will support it anyway.

By what process do voters pick the second-largest party? Gary Cox (1997) shows formally that information determines this behavior. In short, voters cannot strategically desert small parties unless they know where else to go. Cox (1997:98) speculates that expectations come from polls,\(^2\) but he goes on:

> I think strategic voting survives, both in theory and in practice, because one of the things outcome-oriented elites can do in close races to reallocate resources from trailing to front-running candidates is to flood the mass media with “wasted vote” arguments (including therein both the relevant evidence on candidate standings and the basic logic motivating a strategic vote).

The results of recent elections will shape expectations in the absence of polls.\(^3\) They may even shape expectations in the presence of mistrusted polls. The same is true of elite messaging. Winning-minded elites and journalists may themselves fall back on those results. Experimental evidence from Hix et al. (2014) relies on hypothetical results from a most-recent election, and voters respond strategically even without elite cues. Furthermore, since any effort to change the voting system must be an effort to change the party system, we might expect politicians and journalists to harp on small-party hopelessness in the post-reform world to come.

\(^2\) See also Fey (1997). For experimental results involving polls, see Forsythe et al. (1993).
\(^3\) See Forsythe et al. (1993) for experimental results.
Note it does not matter which non-PR system characterizes the post-PR environment (e.g., single- or multi-winner plurality). All that matters is a perception the strategic environment has become hostile to small parties, then that one party above others is the focal point for opposition.

4.1.3 Preferences of other small parties

Non-largest parties that are not second-largest (C above) should support PR to ensure their own survival. Why is independent survival better than a merger? It helps to distinguish coalition parties (e.g., Republicans, Democrats) from coalitions of parties (e.g., the ideal-typical parliamentary setup). If the party can be pivotal to a coalition at some later date, it can extract more from government than if it merged with a coalition party (Bawn and Rosenbluth 2006). Coalition parties, on the other hand, use agenda control to suppress the causes of would-be minor parties (Cox and McCubbins 2005).

4.1.4 Why the second-largest party does not always want repeal

Skeptics now may say that second-largest faction B never should tolerate the presence of an independent C because, were C in a permanent B – C party, B always would get what it wants. B controls a majority of the resulting coalition party and can therefore ignore whatever issue motivates C.

Saying B can dictate its will is not realistic. First, the statement assumes agenda-control fights are costless to B. Second, B may not always be dominant in a B – C coalition party. For example, recent work on nomination politics suggests B will do all it can to remain dominant, but it does not claim that B will win every time (Cohen et al. 2008; Bawn et al. 2012). We cannot rule out that B stands to gain more by
negotiating independently with $A$ than by managing a $B - C$ party to contend with $A$ for monopoly control.

4.1.5 Executive veto points

No non-largest party should advance repeal, regardless of its legislative status, if it controls a non-legislative veto point. In a world where parties compete as veto players, extracting concessions is more important than advancing a majority-supported agenda. Control of an external veto point confers this ability, and preserving PR means promoting a future chance to extract concessions, should that faction lose control of the external veto point. In terms of Figure 1, being a $B$ president, governor, or mayor offsets being $B$ in a legislature where no bill-level coalition ever includes $B$.

4.1.6 Having other factions to absorb

$B$ has no incentive to seek repeal if there are no other small factions to absorb. If there is no $C$, coalitions including $C$ cannot occur more often than coalitions including $B$. $B$ is not most often in control of the decisive vote because $A$ is the only other faction in the legislature, and $A$ is too large for $B$ to matter.

4.1.7 Summary

We can form hypotheses about the voting-rule preferences of non-largest party $B$ – and therefore the demise of PR – by combining the logics of strategic desertion and decisive-vote control. Table 1 summarizes the incentives of any non-largest party. The table does not incorporate control of veto points outside the legislature. Note that if there are only two parties, a non-largest party is the only opposition, and there are no other-party voters to absorb (column three, marked with an asterisk).
Table 4.1: How a non-largest party forms a position on PR.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Party is:</th>
<th>Largest of small parties</th>
<th>Not largest of small parties</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Alone</td>
<td>Among many</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pivotal</td>
<td>Yes PR</td>
<td>Yes PR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not pivotal</td>
<td>Yes PR</td>
<td>No PR</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.2 Data

I argue PR should fall when the second-largest party (a) does not most often control the decisive vote, (b) where it is not just one of two factions, and (c) where it does not control the executive if an executive exists. Testing this explanation requires knowing what the parties are, which are pivotal with what probability, then knowing their relative sizes (i.e., the results of the most recent election). I need three types of data: roll call votes, legislators’ party affiliations, and seat shares at the starts of terms. Due to coalition slates in Cincinnati and Worcester – the Charter Committee and Citizens’ Plan E Association, respectively – party affiliation comprises two sets of data: national-party affiliation and the slate endorsements of those legislators. The data comprise 5,127 roll call votes, 126 unique legislators, and their party-factional affiliations in non-partisan elections over 25 council terms.

Roll calls come from weekly issues of the *City Bulletin: Official Publication of the City of Cincinnati*, 1929-57; semianual volumes of *Proceedings of the Council of the City of New York*, 1938-1947; and original minutes, 1950-60, housed in the basement of Worcester City Hall. Complete sets of Cincinnati City Council roll calls for 1925-9

4. All were photographed with a smartphone, then manually entered into data matrices.
were not available, so these years are not included. None of those years saw a repeal attempt.

For cities that repealed PR in the midst of a legislative term, I include no roll calls for the years following PR’s repeal. These cities are New York and Worcester. In New York, City Council unanimously gave itself four-year terms in the 1944-45 session, that provision went into effect for the 1946-50 term, and PR was repealed in November 1947. In Worcester, voters repealed PR on Election Day 1960, so roll calls for 1961 are not included.

Slate endorsements of candidates come from *Results of Elections in Hamilton County* for Cincinnati, semiannual slate announcements in the *Worcester Telegram* as well as official CEA records, and semiannual listings in the *New York Times*.\(^5\)

Decomposing the slates in Cincinnati and Worcester takes a bit more work. Who were Republicans and Democrats on these? Party affiliations for these cities come from the aforementioned newspapers, three secondary sources (Straetz 1958; Binstock 1960; Burnham 1990), candidate biographies in the *Cincinnati Enquirer*, and voter registration index cards on file at the Worcester Election Commission. Figure 4.2 is an example Worcester voter registration record.\(^6\)

### 4.3 Methods

I identify the pivotal party with a Bayesian, two-parameter, item-response-theoretic (IRT) model of legislative voting (Jackman 2001; Clinton et al. 2004). I fit a separate model for each session. I make standard assumptions across all models. Absences

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\(^5\) The *Telegram* is on microfilm at the Worcester Public Library. Official CEA records are available in the Plan E/CEA Collection, unsorted, at the Worcester Historical Museum.

\(^6\) Combined with annual entries on these cards, a notebook of candidate filings with street addresses (not shown) prevents two errors: mistaking people with the same name, then mistaking party registration if it changes.
and abstentions are treated as missing data. No legislators are deleted, either before estimation or from the estimation results (e.g., legislators who die during a term). The IRT model imposes the following functional form on legislators’ roll-call voting:

\[ y_{ij}^* = \beta_j x_i - \alpha_j + \varepsilon_{ij} \]

Many use this approach to measure revealed legislator ideology, given as scalar ideal points. I do not claim to measure ideology.\(^7\) I am using the model to construct one-dimensional descriptions of legislatures. The model aims to predict legislators’ votes \((y_{ij}^*)\) from their observed roll-call voting. Legislators’ positions along the dimension \((x_i)\) can be “backed out” of their actual votes and two roll-call-level parameters. These are \(\beta_j\), which says how strongly each roll call \((j)\) is positively or negatively

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\(^7\) Measures of ideology based on roll-call voting cannot isolate ideology from other coalition pressures. See Clinton (2012) and Noel (2016).
related to the underlying dimension, and \( \alpha_j \), which adds to or subtracts from \( \beta_j x_i \) as necessary to maximize correct predictions. (Bayesian methods estimate all parameters at the same time.)

I follow standard practice in the literature by estimating one-dimensional models (Clinton et al. 2004; Shor and McCarty 2011; Fowler and Hall 2016).\(^8\) This means we are recovering legislators’ positions along the most salient dimension of legislative conflict. Returning to the example in Figure 1, if \( A - C \) and \( B - C \) coalitions each occur more often than any non-C coalition, \( C \) legislators will emerge as most-pivotal players. Additional dimensions may be interesting for their substantive policy content – say, one in which an \( A - B \) coalition occasionally squares off against \( C \) – but that is beyond the scope of this research. We are reducing the space in Figure 4.1 to the space in Figure 4.3 below, with appropriate uncertainty about legislators’ locations.\(^9\)

\(^8\) Model-fit statistics are plotted in Figure 4.8.
\(^9\) Several choices are arbitrary. One set arises in estimating the IRT model. Following Jackman (2001), I generate 1.5 million samples for each parameter, discard the first 100,000 iterations, and retain the value of each 2,000th of the remaining 1.4 million. I use default start values and the `ideal()` command in R (Jackman 2015). Trace plots of the legislator estimates all give visual evidence that sampling has converged on stable distributions. Another choice involves setting priors for those distributions. I use uninformative ones. The final choice is the number of samples to draw from the joint posterior density in learning who is pivotal. I use the entire set of values.

Ideal point estimates are not identified unless one restricts them in relation to each other (i.e., local identification) and then a larger coordinate space (i.e., global identification). I solve the first problem by constraining point estimates to be normally distributed. The second issue is not a problem. We are interested in the relative positions of legislators, not, for example, whether the “most conservative” member’s mean location is 0.9, 1.5, or 2.2 on the latent dimension.

Global identification can be a problem, however, when the relevant pivot is not the chamber median. The potential trouble here is that the latent dimension may rotate. Consider New York City, where two thirds of Council were required to pass a local law. The relevant pivot then becomes whatever legislator occupies the respective rank. (Recall that the chamber’s size varied with voter turnout.) In order to make sure we are measuring the probability of a party occupying this pivot, I post-process the estimation results so the point estimates correspond to the coalition of factions that organized the chamber.

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Figure 4.3: One-dimensional reduction of the hypothetical policy space depicted in Figure 4.1.

Figure 4.3 makes clear that we do not know the identity of the pivotal party. We see that an $A$ legislator occupies the median position in this nine-seat body (the veto point), but all other $A$ legislators appear to their right, and this $A$ legislator is flanked by both members of $C$. This can result for many reasons: random absences due to sickness, measurement error from the coding of abstentions, legislator replacement due to death or resignation, and so on. Results from the IRT model incorporate this uncertainty.

A more serious problem for my party-based account is potentially low party discipline in $A$ and $C$ above. Who exactly is the pivot, and does their party control them?

I construct a discipline-weighted probability that each party controls the most decisive vote. This requires two big steps. The first involves testing hypotheses that each legislator occupies the pivotal position. Say we want to know the median member of a nine-seat city council. Estimation results let us identify the fifth member with appropriate uncertainty. Laid out in Clinton et al. (2004: 360), these steps give us the probability that legislator $i$ occupies rank $r$:
(1) sample the legislators’ ideal points \( x_i \) from their joint posterior density; (2) rank order the sampled ideal points; (3) note which legislator occupies a particular pivot or order statistic of interest. We then report the proportion of times the \( i_{th} \) legislator’s ideal point is the pivot or order statistic of interest over these repeated samples from the posterior of the ideal points.

The second big step is to create a party-level measure. First I compute a party discipline score for each legislator. This is a standard measure capturing the proportion of times a legislator votes with a majority of their party.\(^{10}\) For each legislator with a non-zero probability of occupying the relevant rank, I multiply that probability by the probability they vote with a majority of their party. Once we know the discipline-weighted probability that member \( i \) occupies rank \( r \), we can sum the discipline-weighted probabilities by party. The result is the probability that each party controls the most decisive vote.

The next piece of information we need is each party’s size. I use its share of seats at the start of a session. This reflects how well it got out the vote, directed voters’ ballot rankings, and coordinated voters who otherwise might have supported different candidates. Initial seat shares also reflect overall performance in an election, not, for example, tactics used later to fill vacancies.

4.4 Results

The sections that follow discuss repeal attempts correctly predicted, repeal attempts I do not predict, attempts I predict that did not happen, then some interesting near-attempts.

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\(^{10}\) For two-member parties, voting with the majority only happens on a unanimous vote. \( \text{R} \) code for computing party discipline of two- and one-member parties is available on request.
To recap, PR should fall when the second-largest party is not most likely to control the decisive vote. In cities with executives (New York), the second-largest party also must not control the executive. Trivially, parties other than the first- and second-largest must be available for absorption. (This is true for every council-term below.)

Figures 4.4-6 are bar charts of (1) the initial divisions of city council, which is the result of the most recent election; (2) a dashed bar for each term indicating which party was most likely to control the decisive vote; and (3) asterisks below the end-years of legislative terms for which my argument predicts repeal on the basis of roll-call voting alone. I include referendum outcomes and narrative evidence as appropriate.

For Cincinnati, we are interested in which party controls the median member. This is because a majority of all sworn members was required to pass ordinances (Werner 1928).

For New York, we need to know which party controls the last member of a two-thirds supermajority since two-thirds of Council were needed to pass a local law. Passage also required consent from the Mayor and Board of Estimate, so I incorporate the factional divisions of those bodies in the discussion (Tanzer 1937: 243-4).

In Worcester, the fifth vote is the relevant pivot because a majority of sworn members was required to enact ordinances.¹¹

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D: Democratic (Charter); r: Charter Republican; P: Progressive Democratic; R: Republican

Figure 4.4: Party strength and identity of most discipline-weighted-pivotal faction in Cincinnati.
Figure 4.5: Factional strength and identity of most discipline-weighted-pivotal faction in New York City.\(^a\)

\(^a\) Joint American Labor-Republican Party control of the mayoralty and Board of Estimate through 1945 rule out repeal until 1946-7.
4.4.1 Attempts correctly predicted

My model correctly predicts the final repeal effort in each city as well as the minority party that participated.

In Cincinnati, Democrats in 1957 had an incentive to join Republicans in repealing PR in order to reclaim the pivot from Charter Republicans (figure 4.4). That is precisely what happened (Reed et al. 1957; Miller and Tucker 1990).

Cincinnati historiography emphasizes repeal as a way to remove a prominent African American, Ted Berry (D), from council (Gray 1959; Banfield and Wilson 1966). Although they agree on the prominence of racist rhetoric in September 1957, those who have studied the case most closely have not been willing to commit to that interpretation (Straetz 1958; Burnham 1990, 1997). My results suggest the Charter Republicans triggered Democratic animus. One possibility is that Charter Republicans supported Democrats on racial issues but voted with regular Republicans on others. As Heisel (1982) observed in a qualitative account, “the council polarized on race.”

I successfully predict three other repeal attempts in Cincinnati. A referendum in May 1936 lost by 759 votes, or 1.1 percentage points. Kolesar (1995) says this initiated with Charter Republicans, as suggested by the roll-call voting. Democrats should have initiated a referendum at the end of 1947. Although Republicans in council authorized this vote, I find evidence that Democrats considered going along (Straetz 1958: 187). The AFL and CIO nonetheless opposed this referendum (126-54), and it lost by 7,592 votes, or five percentage points. Democrats again should have supported repeal after 1953, and many did so in a March 1954 referendum. This ended in a recount and lost by 607 votes, or 0.4 percentage points.
New York City Republicans should have sought repeal at the end of 1947, and in October of that year, they agreed to join the Democrats in doing so. Control of the Mayoralty and Board of Estimate rule out all other repeal attempts predicted on the basis of roll-call voting. The ALP did not need to repeal PR after 1939 nor 1943 because it held a majority on the Board, and Fiorello La Guardia (R-ALP) was mayor. Republicans did not need to repeal PR after 1945 because it held a majority on the Board, and, again, La Guardia was mayor. By 1947, however, control of the Board and Mayoralty had shifted to ALP-Democratic control, and Republicans at the end of that year no longer controlled the decisive council vote.

The Worcester case is straightforward. I predict CEA Democratic support for repeal at the end of 1960, and that is what took shape (Binstock 1960).

4.4.2 Predicted attempts that did not occur

I predict one repeal attempt that did not occur. Cincinnati Democrats should have supported a referendum at the end of 1951. This did not happen because one Charter Republican became a Charter Democrat during that term. This party switch made Democrats the second-largest group. The person who changed sides was Ted Berry, President of the local National Association for the Advancement of Colored Persons.

4.4.3 Attempts not predicted

Roll-call voting does not predict two attempts that did occur. One was a May 1936 referendum in Cincinnati, which lost by 820 votes, or 0.8 percentage points. Figure

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4.4 shows it is not clear who should have been behind it because there was no second-largest party. This may be why the referendum failed. When there is no second-largest party, it is not clear which party will benefit from voters’ strategic desertion.

The second attempt came from Worcester’s regular Democratic Party in November 1959. This vote would have scrapped the PR-manager charter entirely, bringing in a strong-mayor system (the Massachusetts Plan B charter). Figure 4.7 gives precinct-level opposition to repeal by support for Republican and CEA Democratic candidates at the same election. Most Republicans and CEA Democrats opposed the measure. Republicans should have done so as the last-placed party in size. CEA Democrats should have opposed it as the pivotal party.

4.4.4 INTERESTING NEAR-ATTEMPTS

Although neither came to referendum, there are two near-attempts worth note. One occurred in Worcester, and one occurred in New York City.

An unknown group on Worcester’s CEA Board of Directors began to attack PR in the spring of 1955. Their strategy was to have the organization drop a rule obligating endorsees to make favorable campaign statements about PR.

The motion failed. CEA minutes unfortunately do not contain the division on this motion, but theory suggests an explanation. First, Republicans and unaffiliated politicians on the CEA Board might have opposed it. As the pivotal party that year, Republicans had no incentive to repeal PR. Nor would CEA independents have wanted to repeal PR, since theirs was the smallest council grouping.

14. “Against repeal” is the proportion voting “no” on Plan B.
15. Looney, Marguerite. Letter to the editor, Worcester Telegram, March 19, 1955. See also meeting minutes of the CEA Board for May 16 and June 20, 1955. All on file in the Plan E/CEA Collection, unsorted, at the Worcester Historical Museum.
A second near-attempt occurred in New York, when the Democratic caucus voted on December 9, 1941 to hold a referendum the following year. As expected, the Republican/ALP-dominated Board of Estimate pocket-vetoed this measure.\textsuperscript{16} Neither had an incentive to change the party system.

4.5 CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

This chapter has shown that a simple veto-players view of legislative politics can explain why minority parties eventually signed onto the repeal of PR. A big innovation here is to predict voting-system change from legislative roll-call voting.

In Cincinnati and Worcester, I find that parties’ relative sizes and whether they control a partisan veto point explain the timing of repeal attempts. For New York City, my explanation brings in two institutional veto points: the Mayoralty and Board of Estimate.

Although I get good analytic milage by focusing on the second-largest party, I cannot rule out that largest parties had a second incentive to eliminate PR: party disunity. Figures 4.6 and 4.7 show that the system’s largest party in both New York City and Worcester occupied the legislative pivot at the time of PR’s repeal. This suggests that at least some regular Democrats in both cities were joining different coalitions at least some of the time.

It is therefore not surprising that New York City and Worcester built primaries back into their post-PR electoral systems. Recent scholarship says party elites normally dictate the outcomes of primary elections. They do so in order to dictate policy (Cohen et al. 2008; Kousser et al. 2015). If that is true, primaries would have been one way for Democratic leaders in Worcester and New York City to increase party

\textsuperscript{16} See the Proceedings for December 9, 1941, then Shaw (1954:204) for the pocket veto.
unity in government. Cincinnati Republicans did not have a unity problem – a different party was the pivot in 1957 – so it makes sense that Cincinnati’s replacement electoral system did not reintroduce primaries.

Banfield and Wilson (1966: 97) noted early on that PR deprived party elites of power they enjoyed before: “PR breaks down party control over nominations and permits mavericks who owe nothing to party leaders to win office.” Although based solely on anecdotes, their evidence came from the same two cases: New York City and Worcester.

This analysis suggests Banfield and Wilson were conflating two different institutions: STV and nomination by petition. One easily can imagine a system of PR-STV in which party leaders determine who gets ballot access. Such systems exist in Australia (for Senate elections), Ireland, and Malta.

Even if old incumbent parties had a discipline-based incentive to repeal PR in certain years, it was the second-largest party that determined PR’s fate. Joining different coalitions for different bills is a luxury that only the second-largest party can enjoy.
Initial seat shares and pivotal status
Worcester, 1950−61
d: CEA Democratic; R: Republican (CEA);
u: CEA unaffiliated; D: Democratic.

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Most likely to cast deciding vote (discipline-weighted)

Figure 4.6: Factional strength and identity of most discipline-weighted-pivotal faction in Worcester.
Repeal opposition by support for Republicans and CEA Democrats

B=0.93, SE=0.1. Observations are precincts.

Proportion for Republicans + Proportion for CEA Democrats

Figure 4.7: Outcome of the failed November 1959 repeal referendum in Worcester.
Figure A.1: Percent of votes correctly predicted by one-dimensional IRT model of legislative voting, by city and council term.


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