Congressional Voters

17.251/252
Fall 2016
Turnout
(Figure 5.1 updated)

*Actual congressional turnout is likely less than this.
How to Calculate Turnout Pct.

• Turnout Pct. = Turnout / VAP

not

• Turnout / Registered

• New measure: Turnout / Voting eligible population
Turnout/VEP vs. Turnout/VAP
2014
Variation in Turnout
2008 - 2014 (c.f. Fig 5.2)

Mean = 285,084
Mean = 200,891
Mean = 281,255
Mean = 179,067
Correlation in Turnout
2008 to 2010
Primary & General Election
Turnout, 2000
Explaining (Non-)Voting

• Expected value of voting =
  – Benefit the individual receives as a consequence of the election outcome
  – Minus the cost of voting
# Explaining (Non-)Voting

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State of the World w/out Citizen’s Vote</th>
<th>Net Benefit if Citizen Abstains</th>
<th>Net Benefit if Citizen Votes</th>
<th>Condition under which Citizen Should Vote</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(D) wins by more than 1 vote</td>
<td>(B^D_{\text{Citizen}})</td>
<td>(B^D_{\text{Citizen}} - c)</td>
<td>Never</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(D) wins by exactly 1 vote</td>
<td>(B^D_{\text{Citizen}})</td>
<td>(B^D_{\text{Citizen}} - c)</td>
<td>Never</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(D) and (R) tie</td>
<td>((B^D_{\text{Citizen}} + B^R_{\text{Citizen}})/2)</td>
<td>(B^D_{\text{Citizen}} - c)</td>
<td>((B^D_{\text{Citizen}} - B^R_{\text{Citizen}})/2 &gt; c)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(R) wins by exactly 1 vote</td>
<td>(B^R_{\text{Citizen}})</td>
<td>((B^D_{\text{Citizen}} + B^R_{\text{Citizen}})/2 - c)</td>
<td>((B^D_{\text{Citizen}} - B^R_{\text{Citizen}})/2 &gt; c)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(R) wins by more than 1 vote</td>
<td>(B^R_{\text{Citizen}})</td>
<td>(B^R_{\text{Citizen}} - c)</td>
<td>Never</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Salvaging the Calculus

- Citizen duty
- Think about it probabilistically, not deterministically
  - Candidate differential
  - Costs of voting
  - Closeness of election
    - Voter attention
    - GOTV

```
. reg tv

Source |      SS       MS      Number of obs =    433
-------------+------------------------------ F( 1,   431) =  72.45
Model |  2.1029e+11 2.1029e+11      Prob > F     = 0.0000
Residual |  1.2510e+12 2.9025e+09      R-squared    = 0.1439
-------------+------------------------------ Adj R-squared =  0.1419
Total |  1.4613e+12 3.3826e+09      Root MSE     = 53875

        |        Coef.   Std. Err.     P>|t|     [95% Conf. Interval]
-------------+-----------------------------------------------
tvotes2012 |  -897.7943   105.4763    -8.51  0.000    -1105.106   -690.4824
   cons     |   313335.6   4447.584    70.45  0.000       304594    322077.3
```
2012 & 2014

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Votes cast in 2012} & \quad 500000 \\
\text{Votes cast in 2014} & \quad 400000
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Winning margin in 2012, pct.} & \quad 0 \quad 20 \quad 40 \quad 60 \quad 80 \quad 100 \\
\text{Winning margin in 2014, pct.} & \quad 0 \quad 20 \quad 40 \quad 60 \quad 80 \quad 100
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\text{reg tv}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Source} & \quad SS & MS & \text{df} & \text{F(1, 431)} & \text{Prob} > F \\
\text{Model} & \quad 2.1029e+11 & 2.1029e+11 & 1 & 72.45 & 0.0000 \\
\text{Residual} & \quad 1.2510e+12 & 2.9025e+09 & 431 & 0.1439 & 0.1419 \\
\text{Total} & \quad 1.4613e+12 & 3.3826e+09 & 432 & & \\
\text{tvotes2012} & \quad \text{Coef.} & \text{Std. Err.} & \text{t} & \text{P>|t|} & \text{[95% Conf. Interval]} \\
\text{marginpct} & \quad -897.7943 & 105.4763 & -8.51 & 0.000 & -1105.106 \quad -690.4824 \\
\text{_cons} & \quad 313335.6 & 4447.584 & 70.45 & 0.000 & 304594 \quad 322077.3
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{reg turnout marginpct}
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Source} & \quad SS & MS & \text{df} & \text{F(1, 433)} & \text{Prob} > F \\
\text{Model} & \quad 2.6951e+11 & 2.6951e+11 & 1 & 97.27 & 0.0000 \\
\text{Residual} & \quad 1.1997e+12 & 2.7706e+09 & 433 & 0.1834 & 0.1816 \\
\text{Total} & \quad 1.4692e+12 & 3.3852e+09 & 434 & & \\
\text{turnout} & \quad \text{Coef.} & \text{Std. Err.} & \text{t} & \text{P>|t|} & \text{[95% Conf. Interval]} \\
\text{marginpct} & \quad -960.4847 & 97.38473 & -9.86 & 0.000 & -1151.89 \quad -769.0791 \\
\text{_cons} & \quad 215402.7 & 4465.676 & 48.24 & 0.000 & 206625.6 \quad 224179.8
\end{align*}
\]

11
Who is hurt/helped by turnout

• Naïve view: Dems helped by turnout
Who is hurt/helped by turnout

- District view: the “out party”
Deciding whom to support

• Ideology
  – Downsian logic directly

• Party ID
  – Downsian logic by proxy
# PID x IDEO in 2014

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Dem.</th>
<th>Ind.</th>
<th>Rep.</th>
<th>Missing</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Liberal</td>
<td>10,927</td>
<td>2,742</td>
<td>380</td>
<td>797</td>
<td>14,846</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>6,359</td>
<td>7,606</td>
<td>2,385</td>
<td>1,469</td>
<td>17,819</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conserv.</td>
<td>2,057</td>
<td>4,510</td>
<td>10,120</td>
<td>1,670</td>
<td>18,357</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing</td>
<td>1,085</td>
<td>1,094</td>
<td>343</td>
<td>2,656</td>
<td>5,178</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>20,428</strong></td>
<td><strong>15,952</strong></td>
<td><strong>13,228</strong></td>
<td><strong>6,592</strong></td>
<td><strong>56,200</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: 2014 Cooperative Congressional Election Study
# Party and Ideology Distance as Explanatory Factors in 2014 Cong’l Elections

## House Party of voter

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lib.</td>
<td>.96</td>
<td>.86</td>
<td>.23</td>
<td>.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mod.</td>
<td>.88</td>
<td>.51</td>
<td>.14</td>
<td>.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cons.</td>
<td>.76</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>.90</td>
<td>.40</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>.47</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: 2014 CCES

## Senate Ideology of voter

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lib.</td>
<td>.98</td>
<td>.90</td>
<td>.22</td>
<td>.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mod.</td>
<td>.90</td>
<td>.55</td>
<td>.17</td>
<td>.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cons.</td>
<td>.83</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>.93</td>
<td>.41</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.46</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Overall voting effect, 2014 Cong’l election

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Party identification</th>
<th>Effect of changing from an Ind. to a Dem.</th>
<th>House</th>
<th>Senate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0.30 (0.003)</td>
<td>0.30 (0.01)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ideology</strong></td>
<td>Effect of changing from a mod. to a lib.</td>
<td>0.20 (0.003)</td>
<td>0.21 (0.01)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0.20 (0.003)</td>
<td>0.21 (0.01)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democratic incumbent</td>
<td>Effect of changing from a open seat race to a Dem. Inc.</td>
<td>0.085 (0.002)</td>
<td>0.052 (0.009)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0.085 (0.002)</td>
<td>0.052 (0.009)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Constant</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.50 (0.002)</td>
<td>0.50 (0.007)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>R²</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>.58</td>
<td>.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>N</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>28,303</td>
<td>14,946</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A Word about Primaries

- Party not a useful cue
- Not much research, but.....
  - Primary voters are different from general election voters
    - Primary voters are more ideologically extreme, but
    - Primary voters are more strategically sophisticated than general election voters
  - Don’t underestimate the “friends and neighbors” effect
Voting rates in 2010 House primary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rep.</td>
<td>32.6%</td>
<td>2.6%</td>
<td>59.2%</td>
<td>0.6%</td>
<td>5.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ind.</td>
<td>57.3%</td>
<td>12.4%</td>
<td>21.1%</td>
<td>3.0%</td>
<td>6.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dem.</td>
<td>42.2%</td>
<td>49.1%</td>
<td>1.1%</td>
<td>0.7%</td>
<td>7.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>44.5%</td>
<td>23.7%</td>
<td>24.2%</td>
<td>1.4%</td>
<td>6.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Cooperative Congressional Election Study, 2010
(Question not asked in 2014)

Graphs by Primary Vote

Democrats

Republicans

Other

All

Graphs by Primary Vote
Average ideology of primary voters, 2010

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Didn’t vote</th>
<th>Voted in Dem. pri.</th>
<th>Voted in Rep. pri.</th>
<th>Voted in another pri.</th>
<th>Don’t recall</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rep.</td>
<td>1.41</td>
<td>1.16</td>
<td>1.86</td>
<td>1.42</td>
<td>1.20</td>
<td>1.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ind.</td>
<td>0.15</td>
<td>-0.19</td>
<td>1.33</td>
<td>0.59</td>
<td>0.27</td>
<td>0.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dem.</td>
<td>-0.80</td>
<td>-0.91</td>
<td>-0.62</td>
<td>-0.97</td>
<td>-0.59</td>
<td>-0.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td>-0.71</td>
<td>1.66</td>
<td>0.44</td>
<td>0.14</td>
<td>0.29</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

-3 = strong liberal
0 = moderate
+3 = strong conservative
# Std. dev., ideology of primary voters, 2010

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Didn’t vote</th>
<th>Voted in Dem. pri.</th>
<th>Voted in Rep. pri.</th>
<th>Voted in another pri.</th>
<th>Don’t recall</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rep.</td>
<td>1.14</td>
<td>1.42</td>
<td>1.01</td>
<td>1.25</td>
<td>1.28</td>
<td>1.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ind.</td>
<td>1.36</td>
<td>1.37</td>
<td>1.17</td>
<td>1.48</td>
<td>1.40</td>
<td>1.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dem.</td>
<td>1.45</td>
<td>1.45</td>
<td>1.42</td>
<td>1.82</td>
<td>1.51</td>
<td>1.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1.58</td>
<td>1.50</td>
<td>1.14</td>
<td>1.66</td>
<td>1.58</td>
<td>1.69</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

-3 = strong liberal
0 = moderate
+3 = strong conservative
An aside about primary rules: Run-off vs. plurality rule

• Most states: plurality
• The South: the white primary → runoff elections
• California’s “top-two primary”
  – (really like Louisiana’s “Jungle Primary”)
• Interest in “instant runoff”
Spatial representation of runoff primary (Figure 6.2)
Spatial representation of runoff primary (Figure 6.2)
Ahler, Citrin, and Lenz research


*Then read...*

Main Findings

• Voters generally can’t place candidates ideologically
  – Incumbents better placed than challengers
  – Co-partisan candidates are indistinguishable
  – Parties’ candidates distinguishable from each other

• When placed, voters tend to place candidates more centrally than they are
2014: District 4 (Central Valley)

In District 4, incumbent Rep. Tom McClintock made the runoff with fellow Republican Art Moore. McClintock is a conservative and friend of the tea party, while his challenger has positioned himself as the moderate alternative -- a reverse of the “establishment v. tea party” narrative that has plagued this primary cycle.

“If McClintock wins,” however, Rarick* says, “the system didn't work.”

*Ethan Rarick, Director of UCB Center for Politics and Public Service, IGS
Rep. Tom McClintock

Representative from California’s 4th District
Republican

**Elected Positions**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATES</th>
<th>TITLE</th>
<th>STATE / DISTRICT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2009-2016</td>
<td>Representative</td>
<td>California's 4th District</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

See Also: [McClintock’s Official Website](#) | [@RepMcCIntock](#) | [OpenSecrets](#) | [VoteSmart](#) | [Bioguide](#) | [C-SPAN](#)
17.251 Congress and the American Political System I
Fall 2016

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