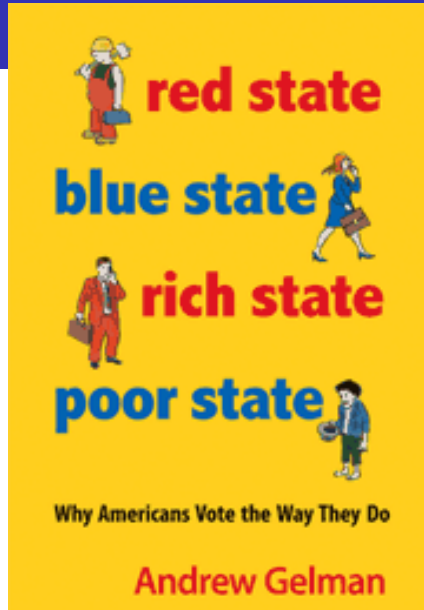


The Book



Should the Democrats move left on economic policy?

Andrew Gelman and Jeff Cai
Columbia University

6 Aug 2008

Should the Democrats move left on economic policy?

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- ▶ Bill Clinton's success with welfare reform and “triangulation”
- ▶ Over twice as many Americans identify as “conservative” than “liberal”

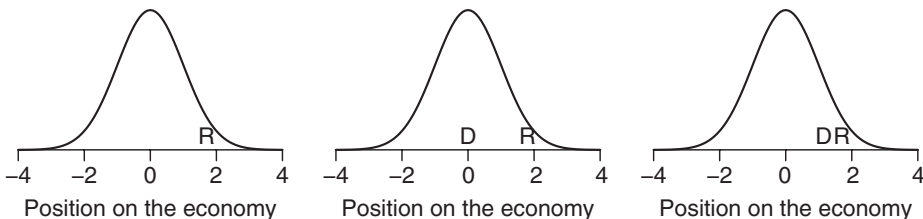
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Median voter theorem



- Where should the Democrats go to win the most votes?

Alternative model: Equilibrium

- ▶ Politicians are optimizers: they should already be at their optimal positions
- ▶ We don't literally believe this, but ...

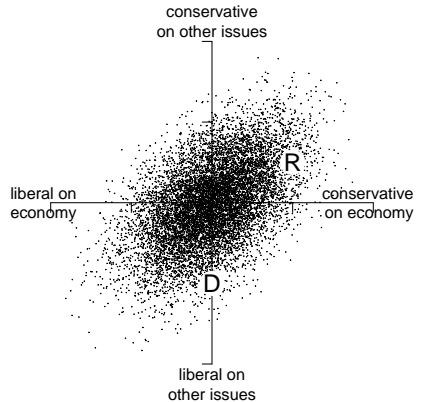
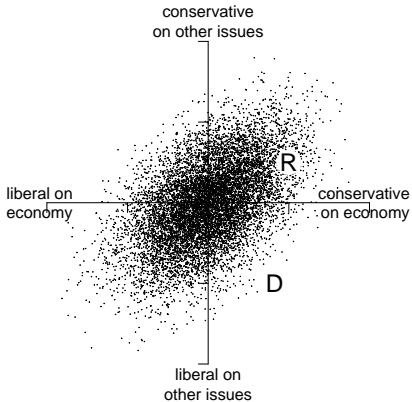
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Extending the models: multiple dimensions



► Where will the Democrats win the most votes?

Extending the model: measurement error

- ▶ Voters don't know (or disagree) on where the candidates stand
- ▶ Something like 30% of voters thought Kerry was more “conservative” than Bush
- ▶ It no longer makes sense to be just next to the other party
- ▶ Return to median voter picture

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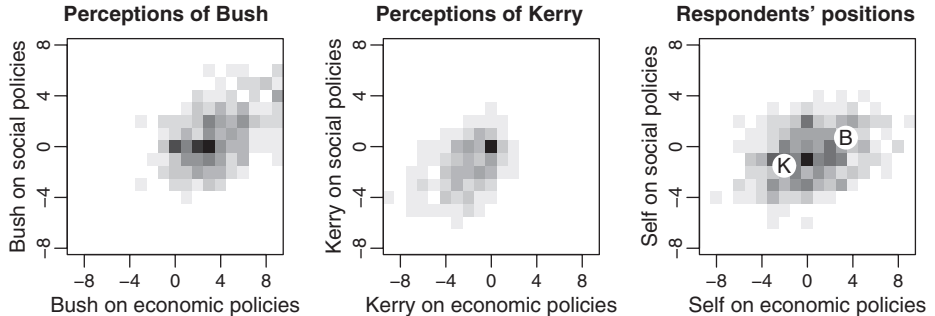
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Placements of Bush, Kerry, and self



Predict views of Bush, Kerry

- ▶ Modeling perceived candidate issue positions given self-placements
 - ▶ Extreme partisans view Kerry as more liberal and view Bush as more conservative
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- ▶ Economic and social distances; for voter i :
 - ▶ $(\text{dist.E})_i = (\text{econ}_i^{\text{Bush}} - \text{econ}_i^{\text{self}})^2 + (\text{econ}_i^{\text{Kerry}} - \text{econ}_i^{\text{self}})^2$
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1. Simulate the shift in the political environment
2. Run the model of the political environment
3. Find the distribution of the political environment
4. Simulate the shift in the political environment

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 - ▶ Compute the predicted election outcomes
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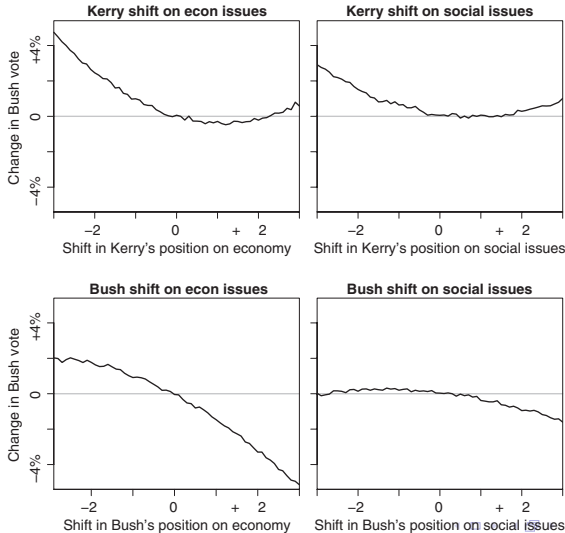
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What would happen if ... ?



Conclusions

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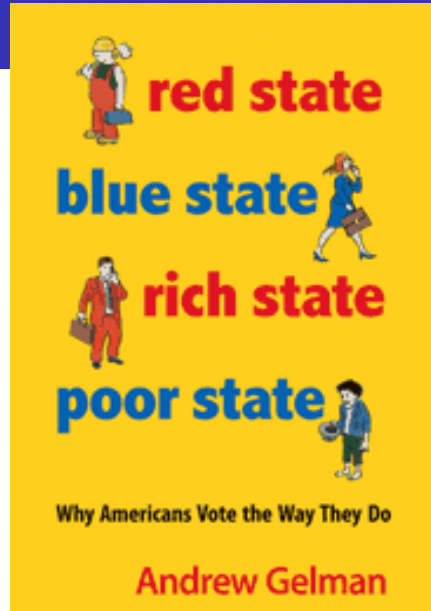
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End — Time for Questions



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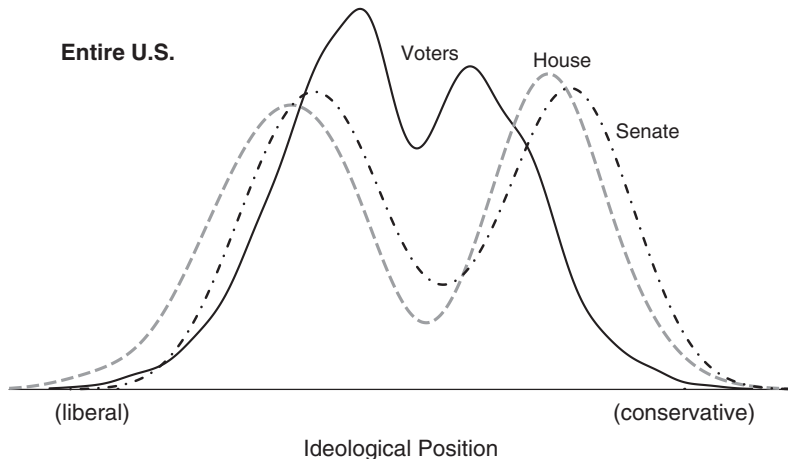
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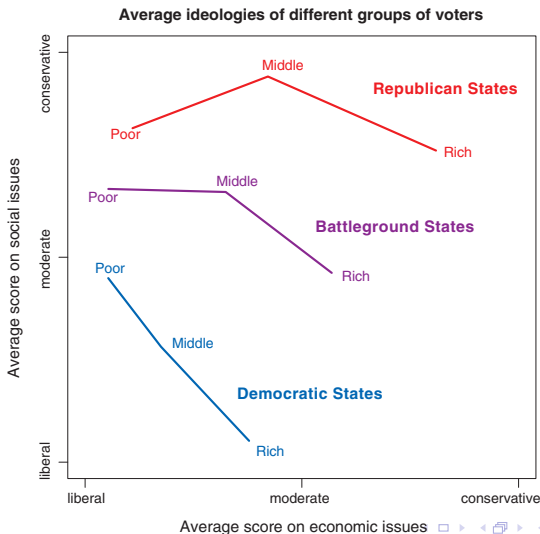
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Estimated positions of voters, congressmembers



Voters in red and blue states



The moderate benefits of moderation in Congress

