

THE IMPACTS OF PARTY COHESION ON DEMOCRATIC ACCOUNTABILITY

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ABSTRACT

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This dissertation features party cohesion as a factor influencing how voters hold ruling elites accountable. It consists of three essays that dissect the impacts of party cohesion on democratic accountability in the United States. In a nutshell, this dissertation finds that when party cohesion increases, the focus of politics is shifted toward partisan rivalries, and hence the ruling elites may not be held accountable to the public as they pursue partisan goals.

The first chapter is an essay titled *Income Inequality and Electoral Costs of Party Loyalty in the United States, 1976-2008*. The United States features a political system where party loyalty has been traditionally seen as electorally costly to individual legislators. However, if being loyal to the party is costly, why did legislators in the U.S. increase their party loyalty to a high level during the past decades? I argue that the electoral cost of party loyalty could be reduced, and I suggest that such a reduction of electoral cost was resulted from the increases in income inequality. The evidence from the U.S. House elections between 1976 and 2008 indicates that party loyalty becomes less costly when income inequality increases. This finding may not only complement the existing theories of party government, but also shatter the conventional wisdom on the role of the party in personal-vote systems.

The second essay is titled *Clarity of Responsibility and Clarity of Party Line: The Impacts of Party Cohesion on Economic Voting in the United States, 1980-2008*. Powell and Whitten (1993) maintain that governing party cohesion is a stable feature of political systems that enhances clarity of responsibility and economic voting. However, party cohesion is not stable, and there are ebbs and flows in party cohesion. Further, research finds that at the micro level, voters respond to partisan cues and become more partisan when the elites from

each party stand with their in-party members and that economic conditions matter less when there are more partisan voters. With data from the American National Election Studies (ANES) between 1980 and 2008, this essay demonstrates that party cohesion is a double-edged sword. As party cohesion increases from a low to mid level, it may strengthen economic voting by enhancing clarity of responsibility. When it is at a high level and party line becomes clear, it may hinder economic voting.

Finally, the essay, *Resisting Being Held Accountable: The Impact of Party Cohesion on Concentration of Votes in the United States, 1992-2012*, is the third chapter. Party cohesion has been seen as a constraint on particularistic exchanges between politicians and voters. However, using the concentration of votes as an indicator of particularistic exchanges between parties and voters, I find that party cohesion has a positive impact on the concentration of votes in presidential elections between 1992 and 2012. This finding suggests that a smaller range of the electorate is served by the incumbent party when the party is more cohesive. Further, I demonstrate that the concentration of votes received by an incumbent party positively affects the vote share of the party. Hence, a higher level of party cohesion does not improve accountability. Instead, it contributes to the ability of a party to resist being held accountable to the interest of the public.

The three essays show how accountability may vary with the changes in party cohesion. The evidence presented suggests that party cohesion may not improve accountability as what political scientists have wished for. Rather, high levels of party cohesion may hinder voters from holding ruling elites accountable for the public interest.

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INTRODUCTION

In the discipline of political science, the benefits and costs of party cohesion are called into question by two contradictory concerns. On one hand, numerous scholars believed that a high level of party cohesion in Congress is key to improving accountability for collective goods. When each party acts as a unitary actor, programmatic party platforms become the focus of politics. Citizens may clearly see distinctive alternative platforms and hold parties responsible for serving the best interest of the public (APSA 1950; Shugart and Carey 1992). On the other hand, the rise of party cohesion after the 1970s ignited a concern about party wars between two cohesive parties and stalemate politics where many national problems are left unsolved (Rae 2007; Sinclair 2006). By extension, this concern implies that when party cohesion increases, parties would not be held accountable to the best interest of the public. Although these two concerns are equally plausible, empirically it remains unclear whether, and how, party cohesion affects the way in which voters hold parties or politicians accountable.

To shed light on this controversy, my dissertation, *The Impacts of Party Cohesion on Democratic Accountability*, includes three studies that explore the influences of party cohesion on voting behavior and the electoral fortunes of parties, as well as legislators. The first essay investigates party cohesion at the level of individual legislators and asks how voters hold legislators accountable for their loyalty to the party. The second essay examines how economic accountability is conditional upon party cohesion. Finally, the third essay empirically tests whether high levels of party cohesion make incumbent parties more accountable for the interests of citizens nation-wide. In light of these three studies, I share the second concern above. That is, when party cohesion increases, the focus of politics is shifted toward partisan rivalries, and hence the ruling elites may not be held accountable to the public as they pursue partisan goals.

Accountability

Accountability is the extent to which citizens may hold the ruling elites accountable for their performance in serving the interest of the ruled. Accountability can also be described in terms of principal-agent relationship. Ruling elites as agents have duties to their principals, citizens; the principals have the rights to punish and reward the agents for their actions. In this sense, accountability is also the capacity of the principals to penalize or reward the agents after their actions (Ferejohn 2007). As Manin, Przeworski and Stokes have pointed out, “governments are accountable if voters can discern whether governments are acting in their interest and sanction them appropriately, so that those incumbents who act in the best interest of citizens win reelection and those who do not lose them” (Manin, Przeworski and Stokes 1999, 40). In other words, holding ruling elites accountable means that voters, through elections, reward the incumbents who serve the best interest of citizens and punish those who do not.

Accountability is a virtue of democracy, a key element of well-functioning democratic politics, as well as one of the important reasons why democracy is pursued. As William Riker has pointed out, “the function of voting is to control officials, and no more,” and this function is “all that is needed to protect liberty” (Riker 1982). In other words, democracy was pursued because people believed that through competitive and fair elections, politicians can be controlled and held responsible for what they do in office. With accountability, there is a chance for citizens to replace unfavorable or incapable politicians with those who might better serve the interest of the public. Without it, there would be no threats to ruling elites, and the voices of people would not be taken seriously. Moreover, a democracy without accountability is not substantially different from an authoritarian country where the ruling elites can resume their powers regardless of governing performance. Even worse, without accountability, democratic politics may not be sustained and consolidated in that people may try to replace the government through ways other

than elections.

However, accountability is far from guaranteed in any democracy. It is prevalent that politicians and parties in democracies may win elections without serving public interest. For example, in developing countries with short-term experience of democratic practice, ruling elites may win elections by particularistic exchanges with voters, as well as by a patron-client network (Shugart and Carey 1992; Kitchelt and Wilkinson 2007; Lynn 2008). Even in an aged, established democratic country, politicians may manage to get reelected by winning personal votes from pork-barreling activities and constituency services (APSA 1950; Arnold 1990; Carey and Shugart 1995; Mayhew 1974). Therefore, lack of accountability is a common problem in democracies.

Lack of accountability can not be discussed in absolutes. There is neither a democracy without any accountability nor a democracy with perfect accountability. For example, as mentioned previously, if parties or politicians in a political system can win elections with particularistic services or clientelistic networks, such a political system can be considered as lacking accountability. However, even in this case, accountability still exists in the sense that the parties or politicians are still held accountable to particularistic interests. As this example shows, lack of accountability is not about whether there is accountability or not, but about trade-offs between different types of accountability.

Due to trade-offs between accountability of different kinds, finding a solution to lack of accountability is difficult. Solutions to lack of accountability often offer trade-offs of their own; they improve some aspects of accountability while leading to deficiencies in others. In the existing literature, increasing party cohesion is one such solution. According to the literature, lack of accountability may result from lack of party-oriented politics. In party-oriented politics, parties act as unitary actors that can be held accountable collectively for its governing

performance. In addition, when parties act as unitary actors, the role of individual politicians is not important. Programmatic party platforms are the focus of politics, and particularistic exchanges that may reduce accountability are constrained due to the dominance of parties in policymaking process (Cox 1987; Shugart and Carey 1992; Franzese, Jusko and Nooruddin 2007; Lynn 2008). Moreover, voters are able to clearly see parties as distinctive alternatives over which they can choose in elections (APSA 1950, Shugart and Carey 1992), and the clarity of responsibility for governing performance can also be enhanced (Powell and Whitten 1993). From this perspective, making legislators vote together with their in-party colleagues in the legislature, or, put it simply, increasing party cohesion, is a solution to lack of accountability. However, taking a closer look, what increases in party cohesion may improve is not the ideal accountability defined previously. While high levels of party cohesion may indeed make parties the focus of politics, they may lead to a severe partisan rivalry and stronger partisanship of the electorate, resulting in party-oriented accountability. Party-oriented accountability means that parties and their performance, instead of the public interest, are emphasized when voters hold ruling elites accountable. Increases in party cohesion thus involve a tradeoff between party-oriented accountability and the ideal accountability.

To further clarify the concepts of party-oriented accountability and the trade-offs between party-oriented accountability and the ideal accountability, three questions are essential: (1) Who is holding the ruling elites accountable? (2) Who are the ruling elites that are held accountable? (3) What are the ruling elites held accountable for? In the case of party-oriented accountability, partisan voters or particular sets of the electorate that strongly support a party are holding the party accountable for partisan goals or the success of party platforms (See Table I.1). However, the ideal accountability exists when citizens can hold ruling elites accountable for the best interest of the public. In other words, to the first question, the ideal answer should be all citizens,

but not partisan voters or particular sets of voters; to the second question, the ideal answer can be all kinds of ruling elites and is not limited to parties; to the third question, the public interest, rather than particular partisan goals or platforms, is the ideal answer. Therefore, party-oriented accountability is neither equivalent to nor improving the accountability that political scientists have conventionally wished for.

Table I.1. Ideal Accountability versus Party-Oriented Accountability

	Citizens	Elites	Performance
Ideal Accountability	All Citizens	All kinds of Ruling Elites	Public Interest
Party-oriented Accountability	Partisan Voters or Core Supporters of A Party	Parties	Partisan Goals or Party Platforms

In the literature, there are three variants of the trade-off between party-oriented accountability and the ideal accountability (See Table I.2), and all of them are involved with party cohesion. First, the extent to which voters hold their legislators accountable for party loyalty involves a trade-off between the accountability for individual legislators' loyalty to their party and the accountability for serving local interests. It is also a trade-off between what Carey (2009) calls individual accountability and collective accountability. In Carey's definition, "collective accountability operates primarily through parties and requires legislators bearing a common party label to act in concert" (Carey 2009, 1). In other words, collective accountability is party oriented. It emphasizes the role of parties and requires individual legislators acting cohesively with their party. By contrast, individual accountability emphasizes whether individual politicians are held accountable to their constituencies independently of parties. By extension, individual accountability is undermined when legislators are held accountable, not for serving

local interests, but for their loyalty to the party in carrying out party platforms. Conversely, if legislators are not held accountable for their loyalty to the party, collective accountability is not likely to exist. Accordingly, in order to understand the trade-off between collective accountability and individual accountability, it is necessary to investigate whether legislators are held accountable for their party loyalty.

The second trade-off between party-oriented accountability and the ideal accountability can be seen in the literature on economic accountability. Economic conditions are crucial in determining the public welfare, and ideally, ruling elites should be held accountable for economic conditions. In the tradition of economic voting, scholars have studied whether voters reward ruling elites for good economic conditions and punish them for bad ones. In their findings, economic voting is contingent upon various factors (Anderson 2007). Among others, one factor that conditions economic voting is clarity of responsibility. The conventional view is that voters are more likely to hold the incumbent party accountable for economic conditions when the clarity of responsibility is enhanced. To have high clarity of responsibility requires that the legislators of incumbent party act cohesively so that voters may attribute certain economic performance to the party's unitary actions (Powell and Whitten 1993). This suggests that high levels of party cohesion and party-oriented politics may improve economic accountability. However, evidence shows that when the elites behave in a partisan manner and when partisan cues are prevalent, voters may downplay economic conditions in the elections (Hetherington 2001; Kayser and Wlezien 2011; Levendusky 2009; Rudolph 2006). Therefore, as high levels of party cohesion lead to a severe partisan rivalry, voting decisions may be affected more by partisan cues than by economic conditions. Party cohesion plays a significant role in the trade-off between economic accountability and party-oriented accountability.

The third trade-off is about a core issue of accountability: Can citizens hold the incumbent

party accountable for serving a broad range of people? As mentioned, such accountability might be hindered when ruling elites manage to obtain sufficient votes by particularistic exchanges between them and certain subsets of the electorate. When such exchanges become the center of politics, politicians are held accountable neither for the “success in delivering collective goods,” nor for “improving overall distributive outcomes along the lines favored by broad categories of citizens” (Kitschelt and Wilkinson 2007, 2). Compared to individual politicians, parties have to win elections in a nation-wide constituency, and their platforms have to target a broad range of citizens. If politics become party-oriented, and if parties discipline their legislators well in carrying out party platforms, particularistic exchanges may be constrained as individual legislators are not able to carry out policies that serve particular sets of voters (Shugart and Carey 1992; Franzese, Jusko and Nooruddin 2007; Lynn 2008). Therefore, party cohesion is key to constraining particularistic exchanges and improving accountability for the public interest. However, a high level of party cohesion may enable a party to better target their certain sets of supporters and win elections on the basis of votes from these supporters (McGillivray 2004). Accordingly, an incumbent party might be held accountable to partisan or core voters of the party, rather than the entire public. The tradeoff between party-oriented accountability and the ideal accountability once again hinges on the levels of party cohesion.

Table I.2. Accountability Discussed in Chapters

	Citizens	Elites	Performance	Trade-offs
Chapter One	Local Constituency	Individual Legislators	Party Loyalty	Individual Accountability v.s. Collective Accountability
Chapter Two	Individual Voters	Incumbent Party	Economic Condition	Economic accountability v.s. Partisan Issues
Chapter Three	Entire Public	Incumbent Party	Collective Goods	Public interest v.s. Particularistic interests

As of today, these trade-offs and the impacts of party cohesion on them have not been completely addressed. One major deficiency of previous studies is that they failed to take into account the variation of party cohesion across time in studying the impacts of party cohesion. In other words, the existing literature has not empirically tested whether accountability varies with the ebbs and flows of party cohesion. Utilizing data for party cohesion in the United States, where party cohesion in Congress has surprisingly increased, my dissertation casts a new light on the impacts of party cohesion on accountability. While it has been commonly believed that high levels of party cohesion may improve accountability, I find little empirical support for such a belief. In particular, the evidence suggests that some aspects of accountability that have been a particular concern of political scientists, including economic accountability and accountability to the entire public, are traded off for party-oriented accountability due to high levels of party cohesion.

Party Cohesion and Accountability in Contemporary American Politics: An overview

A distinctive characteristic of contemporary American politics is that two parties act more like two different unitary actors than before. Individual legislators in the Capitol vote more frequently with their party, and, on average, more than 90 percent of legislators from each party vote with their in-party colleagues in order to fight against the other side (Sinclair 2006). Within four decades, American politics has become much different from what it was.

Before the late 1990s, political scientists could have never imagined such high levels of party cohesion appearing in the United States. In most of literature on American Congress and legislative behavior, American politics was characterized by candidate-centered elections in which party labels and party votes were not decisive to electoral outcomes (Carey and Shugart 1995; Mayhew 1974); by individual legislators that focused on constituency service, acting as if there was no party discipline and frequently voting across party lines in roll call votes (Mayhew 1974; Fiorina 1977; Sinclair 2006) and by within-party heterogeneity that often split each party on important issues (Aldrich 1995; Cox and McCubbins 1993; Cox and McCubbins 2005; Sinclair 2006).

Observing these phenomena, scholars were worried by the consequences of low party cohesion. In 1950, American Political Science Association (a.k.a. APSA) addressed such a concern in a report titled as “Moving toward Responsible Party System.” This report viewed that “when both parties are weakened or confused by internal divisions or ineffective organization, it is the nation that suffers” (APSA 1950, 17). As the report stated, “either major party, when in power, is ill-equipped to organize its members in the legislative and the executive branches into a government held together and guided by the party program,” and “Party responsibility at the polls thus tends to vanish.” The report even considered that this problem “affects the very heartbeat of American democracy” (APSA 1950, 5). The solution proposed by the report is a

party system that is “democratic, responsible and effective—a system that is accountable to the public, respects and expresses differences of opinion, and is able to cope with the great problems of modern government.” Such a system requires “first, that the parties are able to bring forth programs to which they commit themselves and, second, that the parties possess sufficient internal cohesion to carry out these programs” (APSA 1950, 17-8). To sum up, the APSA’s report stressed the importance of increasing party cohesion in order for the United States to have a responsible party system.

A model of the system that the APSA’s report urged to establish can be found in the United Kingdom. Cox (1987) studies the history of the UK’s party system in order to explain why members of Parliament (MPs), unlike American members of Congress (MCs), vote loyally with their party and why voters have a strong tendency to vote for parties instead of individual legislators. He finds that the “efficient secret”—the fusion of the executive and legislative powers in the Cabinet, as well as the extension of suffrage, are the driving forces.¹ In particular, the Cabinet, with the institutional rights to threaten resignation and dissolving Parliament, may pressure in-party MPs to vote cohesively in supporting the Cabinet’s bills, lead to high levels of party cohesion in the U.K. Furthermore, given high levels of party cohesion, the role of individual legislators diminished. Such high levels of party cohesion in Parliament was causally related to why the electorate recognized the dominance of party in determining legislative outcomes and hence voted for candidates on the basis of choices between parties. All in all, due to the secret of the Parliamentary system, the U.K. has developed party-based or party-oriented politics.

For Americans, having a level of party cohesion that is comparable to the UK seemed like a

¹ Bagehot (1865) proclaims that the fusion of executive and legislative powers is the secret that makes the British government run efficiently.

dream that would never come true, given the lack of “efficient secret” inherent in American political institutions. Sharing the same concern with APSA and Cox, pundits have worked to study explanations as to why party cohesion is low in the U.S., and how it can be increased (Aldrich and Rohde 2000a; Aldrich and Rohde 2001; Cox and McCubbins 1993; Cox and McCubbins 2005; Ladwig 2010; Rohde 1991). The focus of research on party cohesion has been put on answering a “how-so” question. However, as mentioned, party cohesion in the U.S. has recently increased, and parties have become important actors in American politics. This recent development in the U.S. indicates that the “dream” has surprisingly come true. It is time for political scientists to shift gears and answer a “so-what” question.

To be clear, the recent development provides a great opportunity to empirically investigate whether it is desirable for Americans to have high levels of party cohesion. In particular, both the APSA’s report and Cox’s work indicate that party cohesion is closely related to how a government and individual legislators are held accountable. Several questions can be derived from these studies: Are American voters more able to hold the incumbent party accountable for the public interest today than before? Is there party-oriented accountability in the making? Does party-oriented accountability hinder other aspects of accountability (e.g. economic accountability)? Do American voters punish or reward their legislators after observing the legislators voting cohesively with the party? The increases in party cohesion in a given political system make it possible to answer these questions and test whether accountability varies with levels of party cohesion

The above investigations require looking into the variation of party cohesion that can be observed by voters. Accordingly, at the level of the party, I measure party cohesion as the average percentage of legislators from a party voting together in each roll call vote. As for party cohesion at the level of individual legislators, I measure party loyalty as the percentage of votes

in which a legislator has voted with the majority of the party out of all (contested) votes during a term (a.k.a. Party Unity Scores). These measurements capture the idea of party cohesion that directly affect policymaking and will be observed by voters. Although these measurements have some problems with measuring the underlying ideological cohesiveness and might fail to distinguish between different sources of observed cohesion (i.e. agenda setting, disciplinary actions of a party, ideological cohesiveness and etc), they are valid measurements when the focus is on the revealed behavior and its consequences.²

With the revealed party cohesion in the U.S. House of Representatives, my dissertation consists of three essays that dissect the impacts of party cohesion on accountability. The three essays can be connected by a single overarching story. Unlike the United Kingdom, the United States does not have the “efficient secret” that may lead voters to realize the importance of party and drive them to vote for parties rather than individual legislators. However, the rise of income inequality has driven American voters to care about the success of the party with which they identify, despite the lack of institutions that may induce party voting. Due to this impact of income inequality, voters are more likely to reward legislators who are loyal to their party and punish the dissenting ones. It is then less costly for legislators to vote loyally with their party, and legislators may be more willing to toe the party line.

The continuing rise of party cohesion ignited party wars in the Capitol and made the party line between two parties clear. Due to the proliferation of partisan cues, voters are less likely to hold the incumbent party accountable for the economy when there is a clear party line. In other words, high levels of party cohesion may hinder voters from holding the incumbent party accountable for the economy. What is worse, with a high level of party cohesion, an incumbent

² Examples of the problems with party unity scores can be seen in Crespín, Rohde and Vander Wielen (2011), Desposato (2005) and Krehbiel (2000).

party may be more capable of carrying out policies that target particular subsets of voters. In return, these targeted voters may give the incumbent party disproportionately large support that may cover the loss of votes from the failure to serve the public interest. As such, high levels of party cohesion may enable ruling parties to resist being held accountable to the public interest.

In the next section, I briefly summarize the puzzle, argument, and methods in each of the essays. These summaries will further show how these essays will contribute to the studies of accountability.

Chapters

The first chapter is an essay titled *Income Inequality and Electoral Costs of Party Loyalty in the United States, 1976-2008*. The United States features a political system where party loyalty has been traditionally seen as electorally costly to individual legislators (Carey and Shugart 1995; Carey 2009; Carson et. al. 2010). However, if being loyal to the party is costly, why did legislators in the U.S. increase their party loyalty to a high level during the past decades? Instead of believing that they were committing political suicide, I argue that the electoral cost of party loyalty could be reduced so that a higher level of party loyalty would not significantly increase the legislators' chances of losing elections. In addition, I suggest that such a reduction of electoral cost was resulted from the increases in income inequality. As income inequality increases, issue cleavages are enlarged, voters sort themselves into the two parties, and party activists gain more leverage in the elections. Consequently, more voters care about the success of the party and hence prefer a loyal legislator to a dissenting one. The evidence from the U.S. House elections between 1976 and 2008 indicates that party loyalty becomes less costly when income inequality increases. This finding may not only complement the existing theories of party government, but also shatter the conventional wisdom on the role of the party in personal-vote systems. Furthermore, this finding shows that income inequality affects the way voters hold legislators accountable and suggests a new direction for future research on the politics of income inequality. Last, this finding suggests that politically polarized behavior by the elites (e.g. House Representatives standing firmly with their party in the House) is punished less than before, implying that polarization also exists among the citizens. This may shed light on the debate over whether polarization exists only among the elites.

The second essay is titled *Clarity of Responsibility and Clarity of Party Line: The Impacts of Party Cohesion on Economic Voting in the United States, 1980-2008*. Powell and Whitten

(1993) maintain that governing party cohesion is a stable feature of political systems that enhances clarity of responsibility and economic voting. However, party cohesion is not stable, and there are ebbs and flows in party cohesion. Their study fails to take into account the variation of party cohesion across time. In addition, they only consider governing party cohesion, while they neglect the role of opposition party cohesion. Given that responsibility can not be clear as many legislators from the opposition party work with the incumbent party, opposition party cohesion should be taken into account in discussing clarity of responsibility. More importantly, the interaction between incumbent and opposition party cohesion can not be explored without including opposition party cohesion into analyses. The interaction between the two parties' cohesion may affect economic voting through a mechanism different from clarity of responsibility. Research finds that at the micro level, voters respond to partisan cues and become more partisan when the elites from each party stand with their in-party members (Hetheington 2001; Levendusky 2009; Rudolph 2006). In addition, it has been observed that economic conditions matter less when there are more partisan voters (Kayser and Wlezien 2011). Accordingly, I argue that a high clarity of party line, which is a result of concurrent high levels of incumbent and opposition party cohesion, may lead to a weak relationship between voters' economic perceptions and voting intentions (a.k.a. weaker economic voting). With data from the American National Election Studies (ANES) between 1980 and 2008, this essay demonstrates that party cohesion is a double-edged sword. While any increases in either party's cohesion might enhance clarity of responsibility, they simultaneously improve clarity of the party line. The consequence is a curvilinear relationship between party cohesion and economic voting. As party cohesion increases from a low to mid level, it may strengthen economic voting by enhancing clarity of responsibility. When it is at a high level and party line becomes clear, it may hinder economic voting. These findings not only contribute to our understanding of economic voting,

but also offer a new insight that high levels of party cohesion may lead to party-oriented accountability and hinder economic accountability.

Finally, the essay, *Resisting Being Held Accountable: The Impact of Party Cohesion on Concentration of Votes in the United States, 1992-2012*, is the third chapter. Ideally, politicians should be held accountable by all the citizens for the best interest of the whole public. In reality, one way for the politicians to resist public accountability is to earn sufficient votes from some subsets of the electorate through providing particularistic services and goods. Party cohesion has been seen as a constraint on such particularistic exchanges between politicians and voters (APSA 1950; Cox 1987; Shugart and Carey 1992). However, using the concentration of votes as an indicator of particularistic exchanges between parties and voters, I find that party cohesion has a positive impact on the concentration of votes in presidential elections between 1992 and 2012. This finding suggests that a smaller range of the electorate is served by the incumbent party when the party is more cohesive. I then continue to demonstrate that the concentration of votes received by an incumbent party positively affects the vote share of the party. Hence, a higher level of party cohesion does not improve accountability. Instead, it contributes to the ability of a party to resist being held accountable to the interest of the public.

Through these three essays, my dissertation provides empirical evidence that helps to clarify the relationship between party cohesion and democratic accountability. In particular, my dissertation takes into account the variation of party cohesion across time in studying the trade-offs between various types of accountability. It further demonstrates that high levels of party cohesion do not affect the accountability in the way that the literature has suggested. Instead, party-oriented accountability is improved by the rise of party cohesion, while the ideal accountability—the extent to which citizens hold ruling elites accountable for the public interest is diminishing in contemporary American democracy.

CHAPTER 1
INCOME INEQUALITY AND THE ELECTORAL COST OF PARTY LOYALTY IN THE
UNITED STATES 1976-2008

In the United States, which has a personal-vote electoral system, parties and party labels are deemed as less important in elections than the cultivation of personalistic support (Carey and Shugart 1995). Thus, legislators may not gain substantial electoral benefits from showing loyalty to their party.³ In addition, voting loyally with one's party in Congress frequently conflicts with serving the interest of local constituencies (Ansolabehere, Snyder, and Stewart 2001; Canes-Wrone, Brady, and Cogan 2002; Carroll and Kim 2009; Carson 2005; Lebo, McGlynn and Koger 2007). Therefore, party loyalty has been traditionally considered and empirically demonstrated to be costly to legislators in the U.S. (Carson et al. 2010). Given that legislators who vote loyally with their party in Congress may risk their personal votes and even their seats, the U.S. political system has long been criticized for its lack of party cohesion.⁴

However, party loyalty in Congress has increased over recent years, which is at odds with the conventional theory. If it is costly for legislators to vote loyally with their party, why would many legislators have increased their party loyalty? While it may be the case that these

³ Carey and Shugart (1995) rank electoral systems by the extent to which a given system generates incentives to cultivate personal votes. According to their ranking, the U.S. system is among those in which legislators have the greatest incentive to cultivate their personal support for their own characteristics or constituency services, as opposed to relying on party labels or party identification. Follow-up studies include those by Hicken and Simmons (2008) and Keefer and Khemani (2009).

⁴ In this research, party loyalty means the extent to which an individual legislator votes loyally with his or her party in Congress. It is measured as the percentage of roll call votes in which a legislator has voted with the majority of the party out of all (contested) votes during a term. Additionally, I use the term party cohesion to refer to aggregate loyalty in order to stress the difference between the aggregate loyalty of a party as a whole and the loyalty of a given individual legislator. Aggregate loyalty means the overall level of the loyalty among the members of a party (i.e. the mean or median of party loyalty in a party).

legislators were not single-mindedly seeking reelection, it is not likely that they were all committing political suicide. An existing explanation in the literature is that the number of safe districts has increased, and the representatives who feel “safe” are more willing to risk losing votes (Carson et al. 2010; Ladwig 2010, 500). While this argument sounds plausible, it does not explain why more and more districts have become safe in the first place. Moreover, a legislator from a safe district might not necessarily find it safe to toe the party line; neither party leaders nor any individual legislator can precisely predict how many votes a legislator is losing in the election for each roll call vote. In other words, no one is sure whether a legislator will still enjoy safety in the next election. Hence, the existing literature is insufficient to explain why a legislator would ever feel safe in voting loyally with the party if party loyalty is electorally costly.

This paper sheds new light on this puzzle by suggesting that increases in income inequality may have changed the way the American voters hold legislators accountable for legislators’ party loyalty, leading to a reduction in the electoral cost of party loyalty. The literature on the politics of income inequality has demonstrated that the widened gap between the rich and poor has enlarged the issue cleavages among citizens (Gelman 2008), motivated voters to sort themselves into the two parties (Gelman 2008; McCarty, Poole and Rothenthal 2006) and granted party activists more leverage in elections. Accordingly, I argue that there would be more voters caring about the success of the party with which they identify. These voters would appreciate, rather than punish, loyal legislators. It follows that party loyalty would be less costly to legislators than it was before. In other words, legislators are more loyal, not because they are more willing or able to bear the electoral cost of party loyalty, but because the electoral cost of party loyalty has lessened as income inequality has grown.

By investigating the association between income inequality and the electoral cost of party loyalty in House elections from 1976 to 2008, I demonstrate that the electoral cost of party

loyalty decreases with income inequality.⁵ This finding echoes a quote from Jacobson and Bovitz (1998, 21): “Loyalty is evidently calculated; the general rule seems to be [...] go with the party only if the expected electoral penalty will not significantly increase your chances of losing your seats.” In other words, legislators may vote loyally with their party in Congress when doing so is not likely to cost them the next election. Compared to the previous literature, the findings in this paper are more consistent with the observed rise of party loyalty in Congress.

Additional implications can be drawn from this paper. First, the findings in this paper imply that a responsible party system is more likely to exist when there is a higher level of income inequality. A responsible party system is one in which parties act cohesively to carry out party platforms and can be held accountable collectively (APSA 1950; Ranney 1962); hence, the government can be run in an efficient way (Cox 1987). While a responsible party system requires a high level of party loyalty, the personal-vote system may constrain increases in party loyalty in the U.S. However, the evidence here suggests that this constraint on party loyalty is less effective when income inequality increases and the electoral cost of party loyalty is reduced. This finding may not only complement the existing theories of party government, but also shatter the conventional wisdom on the role of the party in personal-vote systems. Second, the findings point out a political impact of income inequality that has not yet been fully explored. The political impacts of income inequality in the United States and in the whole world have drawn the attention of the political scientists and motivated a high volume of studies.⁶ As of today,

⁵ This period is the so-called post-reform era. During the 1970s, the U.S. experienced a series of congressional reforms which increased the power of the leadership of the majority party and weakened committee chairmen (Rohde 1991). These reforms contributed to a stronger party influence in Congress (Cox and McCubbins 2005; Cox and McCubbins 2007; Rohde 1991; Smith 2007). By focusing on this period, I am able to set aside the effect of the congressional reforms on legislative behavior and look into the association between income inequality and the electoral cost of party loyalty.

⁶ Income inequality has been examined as a factor affecting political participation (Gaventa 1980; Pateman 1971;

however, there is little work investigating the linkage between income inequality and the way in which individual legislators are held accountable by voters. My paper indicates a new direction for studies of income inequality. Third, the finding that politically polarized behavior by the elites (e.g. House Representatives standing firmly with their party in the House) is punished less than before implies that polarization also exists among the citizens. This may shed light on the debate over whether polarization exists only among the elites.⁷

Schattsneider 1960; Solt 2008; Solt 2010), political polarization (Bartels 2004, 2008; Garand 2010; Gelman 2008; McCarty, Poole, and Rosenthal 2006), democratization (Acemoglu and Robinson 2006; Boix 2003) and violence (Nepal, Bohara and Gawande 2011; Weede 1981).

⁷ There is an unsettled debate about political polarization in the U.S. While some scholars observe that American citizens are polarized (Abramowitz and Saunders 1998, 2008), others argue that the polarization of citizens is a myth (Fiorina, Abrams and Pope 2006). In addition, there are scholars taking the middle position that the elites and the citizens are both polarized in one way or another (Gelman 2008; Levendusky 2009; McCarty, Poole and Rosenthal 2006).

Costs and Benefits of Party Loyalty

It has been documented that legislators in the U.S. bear an electoral cost associated with their party loyalty. The U.S. has a single member district (SMD) system with primary elections. Legislators in such a personal-vote system are expected to have low party loyalty because party votes are downplayed by legislators in elections and voting loyally with the party in Congress may not benefit legislators (Carey and Shugart 1995). Empirically, scholars have also found that the closer a legislator's ideological (policy) position is to the party, the fewer votes the legislator gains in the next election (Ansolabehere, Snyder, and Stewart 2001; Canes-Wrone, Brady, and Cogan 2002; Carson 2005). Arguing that ideology is different from party loyalty, Carson et al. (2010) have directly demonstrated that party loyalty is electorally costly to legislators.

Despite the evidence of the electoral cost of party loyalty, some studies suggest that party loyalty can also be electorally beneficial to legislators. Party cohesion (i.e. the aggregate loyalty of a party's members) enhances the informativeness of a party label (Ashworth and Bueno de Mesquita 2008), and this helps reduce voters' uncertainty about the candidates who carry that party label (Snyder and Ting 2002). By extension, when a party is more cohesive, its party label better provides voters with "surety" about the individual candidates' actions in office (Grynaviski 2010), improving the credibility of candidates from that party (Adams, Merrill and Grofman 2005). A higher level of party loyalty in an individual candidate indicates a higher probability that the candidate will help in carry out the party platforms. Conversely, a low level of loyalty signals that the candidate will not be a reliable contributor to the success of the party platform.

Taken all together, party loyalty may bring both benefits and costs to a legislator. Table 1.1 shows that the correlation between legislators' party loyalty and vote shares changes over time. From 1976 to 2008, the overall correlation between party loyalty and vote share is $-.042$ ($p < .001$), suggesting that a higher level of party loyalty is associated with a smaller vote share. However,

there was a notable change during this period. From 1976 to 1984, the legislators with higher loyalty indeed obtained a smaller vote share, as the literature suggests. Between 1986 and 1998, the correlation coefficients were statistically insignificant. Starting from the election in 2000, the correlations become positive and statistically significant. These changes indicate that party loyalty may no longer be associated with a cost in terms of vote share. A roughly parallel development is that the average and median party loyalty in the House gradually increased over the period. If party loyalty were costly, any influences that drove party loyalty to rise would have been offset by the electoral cost, and the increases in party loyalty would have been limited. The rise in party loyalty thus adds to the evidence that the electoral cost of party loyalty may have become smaller.

Table 1.1. Party Loyalty and Its Correlation with Vote Share

Term	Reelection	Correlation	Median Party	Average Party
94	1976	-.243***	82.732	75.238
95	1978	-.169**	80.154	73.935
96	1980	-.124*	84.086	77.177
97	1982	-.150**	83.221	77.526
98	1984	-.100*	85.862	80.315
99	1986	.003	86.680	82.577
100	1988	.068	88.568	84.114
101	1990	.006	86.802	82.562
102	1992	-.015	88.087	84.606
103	1994	.084	91.748	87.944
104	1996	.026	92.821	87.655
105	1998	.066	91.798	87.732
106	2000	.203***	91.729	87.831
107	2002	.151**	94.171	90.674
108	2004	.185***	94.658	92.244
109	2006	.115*	94.318	91.544
110	2008	.238***	96.022	93.199

Note: 1. σ : $p < .1$; *: $p < .05$; **: $p < .01$; ***: $p < .001$

2. The data for party loyalty is the party unity score from the Voteview.com (2012), and the data for vote share is from the Office of the Clerk of the U.S. House Representative (2012).

What could have led to these changes? According to the previous discussion, party loyalty can be beneficial in that it signals how promising a legislator would help in carrying out party platforms. Such an effect would take place and manifest only when voters care about whether their favorable party platforms can be successfully carried out by the party. Thus, what led to the proliferation of voters who care about the success of a party could be the same factor that led to the reduction in the electoral cost of party loyalty. As follows, I argue and demonstrate that income inequality is one of the driving forces.

Income Inequality and Electoral Cost of Party Loyalty

Income inequality per se seems to be irrelevant to party loyalty, yet it is empirically associated with the electoral cost of party loyalty. Before the late 1970s, income inequality in the U.S. remained at a relatively low level. The value of the Gini Index, a commonly adopted measure of income inequality, fluctuated between 35 and 37. Between 1976 and 2008, it increased from 35 to 44.⁸ Because the Gini Index may not indicate the segment of society where changes in the income distribution occur, I also examine “the ratio of the upper bound value of the ninth decile (i.e. the 10% of people with highest income) to that of the first decile (i.e. the 10% of people with lowest income)” (OECD iLibrary 2013).⁹ This alternative measurement shows the difference in income between the rich and poor. During the years under investigation, the ratio increased from 3.69 to 4.89, and the average ratio is 4.34. The pattern is similar to that of the Gini Index. These facts and Table 1 jointly indicate that during the rise of income inequality, the negative association between party loyalty and the vote shares of individual legislators gradually changed to a positive one. In other words, the electoral cost of party loyalty is smaller when there is a higher level of income inequality.

Could income inequality and the electoral cost of party loyalty be endogenous? Or, is the empirical association between the two a spurious relationship which results from other factors? In numerous studies, the rising inequality in the world, as well as in the United States, is attributed to globalization and technological advancements (Alderson and Nielsen 2002;

⁸ The Gini Index ranges from 0 to 100, with 0 indicating perfect equality and 100 indicating maximal inequality. Perfect inequality means that every unit gets the same amount of income, while maximal inequality means that one unit gets all of the income. The data is drawn from the US Census Bureau (2012). In this paper, I present family income inequality, but the trend for household income inequality is quite similar.

⁹ The data for the decile ratio is taken from the Organization for Economic Co-Operation and Development (OECD) and the description of the decile ratio is from OECD iLibrary (2013).

Blanchflower and Slaughter 1999; Charles-Coll 2011; Krueger 2012; Neckerman and Torche 2007). Although partisan manipulation of macroeconomic policies could strengthen or mitigate the rising trend of income inequality, it has not fundamentally stopped the rise of income inequality (Bartels 2008).¹⁰ Furthermore, there is no existing work indicating any other factors that could theoretically or empirically affect both national income inequality and the district-level relationship between party loyalty and vote shares. It is reasonable to hypothesize that income inequality serves as an exogenous condition that affects the electoral cost of party loyalty.

Income inequality and the electoral cost of party loyalty are not associated simply by chance; theoretical mechanisms that link the two have been suggested by literature on the politics of income inequality. In short, increases in income inequality may enlarge issue cleavages, sort people into partisan groups and grant party activists more leverage in the elections. As a result of these mechanisms, more voters care about the success of a party and prefer a loyal legislator to a dissenting one, leading to a smaller electoral cost of party loyalty. In what follows, I will discuss each of these mechanisms in turn.

Enlarging Issue Cleavages

Since most policies are involved in the deployment and allocation of resources in society, the rich and poor may possess different policy preferences. Page, Bartels and Seawright (2013) provide evidence that the rich indeed view various issues differently than other people. They also

¹⁰ Bartels (2008) argues that there are partisan differences in facilitation of income growth for high and low income people. In short, Democratic governments help the income growth for the poor, while Republican governments facilitate the income growth for the rich. However, in my view, if the partisan differences are the major drivers of income inequality, income inequality should be fixed at a certain level because the effect of one party's policies could be offset by those of the other party.

find that policy preferences over economic regulation and social welfare are closely associated with those over other issues. As such, the rich and poor may have different preferences not only for distributive or redistributive policies, but also for policies that are seemingly irrelevant to the distribution of wealth.¹¹

While the poor have become poorer, the rich richer, as President Obama has pointed out, “The middle class has shrunk” (Krueger 2012, 1). When the gap between the rich and poor is enlarged, so are the differences in policy preferences between these two groups (Gelman 2008). Figure 1.1 shows a graphical illustration of this process. When income inequality is relatively low, there are two distinct types of people with different policy preferences (shown as \circ and \square), as well as some middle class people (*) with moderate policy preferences. When income inequality is high, the distance between the two distinct types is enlarged. In addition, those with moderate preferences gradually disappear. Given that the middle class has shrunk and the intersection of policies preferred by the groups at the extremes has become smaller, within each group, there are fewer moderate members who might support policies favorable to the contesting group. Meanwhile, even though heterogeneity may still exist within each group with regard to preferences on issues that are arguably less relevant to income (e.g. moral issues), the majority of each group supports policies that are strictly distinct from those preferred by the contesting group.¹² All in all, when there is a high level of income inequality, the policies preferred by the

¹¹ Page, Bartels and Seawright (2013) examine attitudes toward issues that are not directly related to the economy, including scientific research, environmental protection, homeland security, defense spending, and education. They find that even on those issues, the rich have different views than the general public.

¹² If issues that are irrelevant to income had a large influences on the politics, partisan sorting according to income levels would not have been observed in the previous literature (Gelman 2008; McCarty, Poole and Rothenthal 2006). Further, it would not have been observed in this paper that income inequality conditions the electoral cost of party loyalty. Given the empirical evidence presented in the literature and in this study, it is reasonable to state that most voters are influenced by issues that are relevant to income.

rich are much more different from those preferred by the poor. A result of this development is that not only rival policies, but also moderate ones, become less acceptable to voters at each extreme.

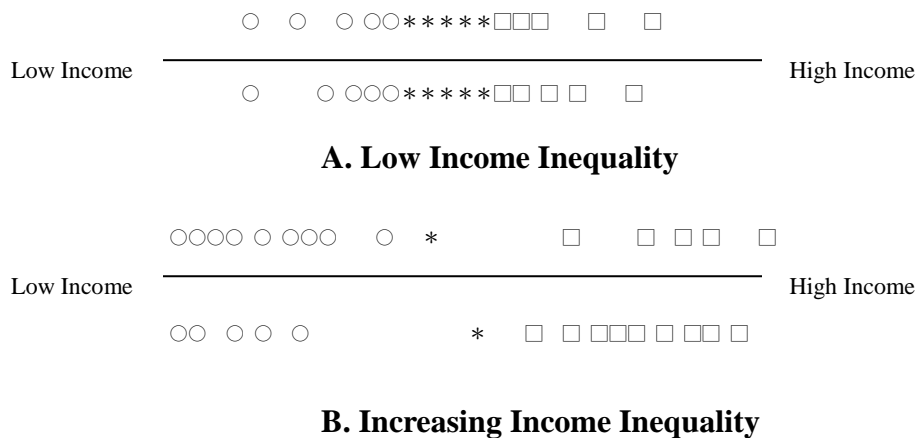


Figure 1.1. Income Inequality and Issue Cleavages

Sorting People into Partisan Groups

Gelman (2008) and McCarty, Poole and Rothenthal (2006) observed that issue cleavages were more partisan and that voters were sorting themselves into different parties. As they reported, the partisanship among voters incrementally changed along the line separating the rich and poor. The phenomenon observed involved not only more voters identifying themselves with parties, and fewer voters identifying themselves as independents, but also voters grouping themselves into different parties according to their differences in income. In other words, given that rival and moderate policies are less acceptable, voters are more motivated to sort themselves into parties in order to pursue favorable policies and prevent unfavorable ones from being carried out. It follows that the success of the other party, which may bring about unfavorable policies, is less acceptable to the voters of either party. As a result, more voters care about which party wins elections (Stonecash 2006).

The enlarged gap in policy preferences means that voters on each end of the policy spectrum have moved away from the center, and they would find the party on the other side more distant. Meanwhile, since a high level of party loyalty signals that a legislator often stands with the party's positions, voters also find themselves closer to an in-party legislator who votes loyally with the party. The party loyalty of an in-party legislator is thus favorable to the voters who have a stronger sense of being members of the party.

Granting Party Activists More Leverage

When income inequality increases, there is a lower level of political participation (Gaventa 1980; Pateman 1971; Schattschneider 1960; Solt 2008; Solt 2010). While regular voters withdraw from the elections, party activists can still be mobilized by parties to participate in politics (Grynaviski 2010). As a consequence, party activists gain greater leverage on the electoral outcomes.

Empirically, two pieces of evidence support that party activists have gained greater leverage in elections. First, it has been argued that party activists exert great influence in primary elections, motivating legislators to take positions close to those of their party (Ansolabehere, Snyder, and Stewart 2001; Aranson and Ordeshook 1972; Brady, Han, and Pope 2007; Coleman 1971).¹³ However, if voters in general elections had been punishing loyal legislators, generating a substantial cost of party loyalty, the increases in party loyalty in Congress due to primary elections would have been limited. Second, if party loyalty had remained costly in general elections, the reelection rate of legislators would have been lower, given that many legislators have increased their party loyalty. However, the continuing high rate of reelection indicates

¹³ It has also been argued that primary elections constrain the influence of the party leadership on the nomination of candidates, leading to smaller incentives for legislators to be loyal to the party (Carey and Shugart 1995; Mayhew 1974; Shugart and Carey 1992). Since primary elections are not the focus of this research, I leave this controversy for future studies.

otherwise.¹⁴ Therefore, the influence of party activists may have been extended to general elections. Compared to other voters, party activists are more likely to care about the success of the party and to prefer a loyal legislator over a dissenting one. When these party activists gain more leverage in elections, party loyalty becomes less costly to legislators.

Through the above mechanisms, increases in income inequality may shift the focus of voters toward the success of the party. Voters concerned with the success of the party, especially party activists, appreciate the party loyalty of in-party legislators. In addition, dissenting legislators who have not firmly supported the party's positions are seen as out-party legislators or "traitors" who deserve to be punished in elections.

To go beyond the prima facie association between income inequality and the electoral cost of party loyalty, I test by regress analysis of whether the relationship between party loyalty and vote share is conditional upon the level of income inequality. If such conditionality exists, a higher level of party loyalty will cost individual legislators fewer votes when income inequality is higher, while it will cost more votes when income inequality is lower. Accordingly, the regression analysis is designed to test the following hypothesis:

When national income inequality is at a higher level, the party loyalty of an individual legislator has a smaller negative effect on the vote share received by that legislator. When national income inequality is at a lower level, the party loyalty of an individual legislator has a larger negative effect on the vote share received by that legislator.

¹⁴ The reelection rate for House representatives has never been lower than 85% since 1964. Between 1976 and 2008, the reelection rate was, on average, 94.59 % (OpenSecrets 2014, www.opensecrets.org/bigpicture/reelect.php).

Regression Analysis

The dependent variable is the vote share of each individual legislator. It is calculated as the number of votes received by a legislator divided by the total votes cast in the legislator's district in a given election. I multiply this number by 100 to make it a percentage. The data for the vote shares is obtained from the U.S. House of Representatives (2012).¹⁵ Given that my theory involves a cross-level interaction, I conduct both pooled OLS regression and random-effect multilevel analysis.¹⁶

The key independent variables are *Party Loyalty*, *Income Inequality* and the interaction between them. *Party Loyalty* is defined as the extent to which a legislator acts together with the party. I adopt the most common measurement of party loyalty, which takes the percentage of votes in which a legislator has voted with the majority of the party out of all (contested) votes during a term. Although this measurement, which is also known as the Party Unity Score, has some problems with measuring the underlying ideological cohesiveness between a given legislator and the rest of his party, it is still a valid measurement when the focus is on the revealed behavior and its consequences.¹⁷ The main concern in this research is how voters punish and reward individual legislators after they observe the extent to which the legislators of a party act together to carry out the party platform. Therefore, the observed behavior is much more relevant to the purpose of this research than the underlying cohesiveness. The source of the data is Voteview.com, maintained by Keith Poole, which provides a complete record for roll call votes

¹⁵ Office of the Clerk, U.S. House of Representatives. 2012. http://clerk.house.gov/member_info/electionInfo/index.aspx.

¹⁶ The random-effect model is a random-slope model because my theory involves the interaction between party loyalty at the level of individual legislators and income inequality at the level of election years. However, the results are not different in a meaningful way when random-intercept estimation is applied.

¹⁷ Examples of the problems with party unity scores can be seen in Crespín, Rohde and Vander Wielen (2011), Desposato (2005) and Krehbiel (2000).

from 1879 to 2010. As shown in Table 1, from the 94th to the 110th House of Representatives, the median party loyalty increased from 82% to 96%, and the average increased from 75% to 93%. As mentioned, *Income Inequality* is measured by the Gini Index and the decile ratio of income between the 90th percentile and the 10th percentile.¹⁸ I will present two separate sets of models using the two different measurements. To test the hypothesis that the relationship between party loyalty and vote share is conditional upon income inequality, I include the interaction between *Party Loyalty* and *Income Inequality*. I expect that the negative effect of party loyalty will be reduced by increases in income inequality, and therefore, the interaction should have a positive coefficient.

In addition to the key independent variables of interest, I also control for some variables that have been noted as relevant in the literature. First of all, as in most of the literature, I include *Ideological Extremism* of each legislator, transformed from DW-NOMINATE scores. These scores measure legislators' voting tendencies on the liberal-conservative spectrum. Carson et al. (2010) argue that in voters' evaluations, party loyalty and ideology are two different dimensions, and as noted before, ideological extremism has been seen as negatively related to the electoral fortune of legislators. The data for DW-NOMINATE scores is drawn from Voteview.com, and I take the absolute values of the scores so that a higher score indicates a more extreme ideology, no matter whether the legislator is liberal or conservative.

In order to control for the personal characteristics of incumbent legislators, I include *Freshman*, *Party Leader* and *Previous Vote Share*. These variables represent factors conventionally regarded as affecting congressional elections. First, *Freshman* is coded as 1 if the incumbent legislator is a freshman running for his or her first reelection, and 0 otherwise. The

¹⁸ As noted, I use the Gini Index for family income inequality, but using household income inequality does not change the results of the regression analysis in a meaningful way.

variable indicates both seniority and electoral experience. I hypothesize that a freshman is electorally vulnerable compared to other legislators. The data is drawn from Gary Jacobson's dataset.¹⁹ Second, *Party Leader* is coded as 1 if the legislator is a party leader (i.e., Speaker, majority leader, minority leader, whip, Democratic caucus chair or Republican conference chair), and is coded as 0 otherwise. The data is taken from the website of the Clerk of the House of Representatives. Since party leaders may have to spend more time and effort in the Capitol and less in the districts, I hypothesize that they are more vulnerable than other legislators in the elections. Third, *Previous Vote Share* is included to control for the effect of an individual legislator's previous electoral results and the baseline variation of vote share among legislators.

Further, I control for the characteristics of the electoral competition faced by a given legislator by including the variables *Challenger's Quality*, *Midterm* and *Presidential Approval*. *Challenger's Quality* measures another crucial factor in U.S. Congressional elections (Carson 2005; Jacobson 2004). When facing an experienced challenger, incumbents obtain fewer votes than they would otherwise. I include Jacobson's experienced candidate, which is a dummy variable with 1 indicating that the challenger(s) previously held elected office and 0 otherwise. At the national level, midterm elections (*Midterm*) and *Presidential Approval* have been thought to have an effect on congressional elections. Compared to elections in the presidential election years, midterm elections are thought to be more difficult for the legislators of the president's party (hereafter, "in-party legislators"), but easier for those of the other party (hereafter, "out-party legislators") (Erikson 1988). I code the variable *Midterm* as 0 when a given election is in the year of a presidential election, 1 when it is a midterm election for an in-party legislator and -1 when it is a midterm election for an out-party legislator. *Presidential Approval* is expected to have a positive effect on the vote share of the legislators who are in the president's party.

¹⁹ I deeply appreciate Prof. Jacobson's generosity in offering his dataset and allowing me to use it in this research.

Conversely, it should have a negative impact on the vote share of the legislators from the other party. I take the presidential approval rating that was measured the closest to election day for each House election from Gallup (2013), and I subtract 50 from each number. I multiply the resulting numbers by -1 for the out-party legislators.

Last, the economic conditions at the national level during the election years, in terms of logged GDP per capita based on purchasing power parity (hereafter, *Log GDP*) and the unemployment rate (*Unemployment*), are controlled for in the model as well. These two variables are also coded with consideration of the difference between in-party and out-party legislators; I multiply the values by -1 for those who are not in the president's party. I thus expect to find a positive coefficient for *Log GDP* and a negative one for *Unemployment*. The former means that a greater GDP is expected to help in-party legislators, while it costs out-party legislators votes. The latter means that a higher unemployment rate is expected to cost in-party legislators votes, while it benefits out-party legislators.²⁰ The data for GDP is taken from the World Development Indicators, and the data for unemployment rates is from the Bureau of Labor Statistics.²¹

Findings

In Table 1.2, Model I, II and III are the models with income inequality at the national level measured by the Gini Index, while Model IV and Model V are the models with income inequality measured by the decile ratio. Model I is a pooled OLS regression without any control variables. The negative coefficient for party loyalty and the positive coefficient for the interaction between party loyalty and income inequality suggest that the electoral cost of party

²⁰ I follow Carson et al. (2010) in coding *Midterm*, *Presidential Approval*, *Log GDP* and *Unemployment* so as to account for the partisan differences in the effects.

²¹ The data for GDP is taken from NationMaster.com (2012) and The World Bank (2012), and the unemployment rates are from Bureau of Labor Statistics (2012).

loyalty can be mitigated by increases in income inequality.

To take the analysis a step further, Model II includes all the control variables. The conditioning effect of income inequality remains. Namely, the effect of party loyalty differs depending on the levels of income inequality. The negative effect of party loyalty (i.e., the electoral cost of party loyalty) can be reduced by an increase in income inequality. According to the coefficients, when the Gini Index is as low as 35, a one-unit increase in party loyalty costs a legislator .151 percent of votes. As the Gini index increases by one unit, the cost of party loyalty decreases by .016 percent. When the Gini Index increases to 44, a one-unit increase in party loyalty only costs a legislator .007 percent of votes—the electoral cost becomes subtle. By extension, other things being equal, in an election year in which the Gini Index is greater than 44.44, the effect of party loyalty will turn out to be positive. Model III is a random-effect model with the same variables that are included in Model II. The coefficients are significant and similar, which again supports my hypothesis.

Model IV is a pooled OLS regression with income inequality measured as the 90/10 decile ratio. In this model, a similar relationship exists, except that the interaction between party loyalty and income inequality is only significant at the .1 level. Model V is a random-effect model using the decile ratio. In this model, the interaction term is significant at .01 the level. Two implications can be drawn from these models. First, even with a different measurement of income inequality, the negative effect of party loyalty is reduced as income inequality increases. Second, these coefficients suggest that when the people at the 90th percentile of income earn 4.80 times more than those at the 10th percentile, party loyalty will have a positive effect on legislators' vote share.

Table 1.2. Regression Analysis for the U.S. House Elections

	Model I	Model II	Model III (RE)	Model IV	Model V (RE)
	B (CRSE)	B(CRSE)	B (SE)	B (CRSE)	β (SE)
Loyalty	-1.54 (.23)***	-.71 (.29)*	-.76 (.18)***	-.48 (.22)*	-.54 (.14)***
Inequality	-3.65 (.56)***	-1.69 (.68)*	-1.78 (.38)***	-11.20 (4.95)*	-12.30 (2.94)***
Loyalty×Inequality	.04 (.01)***	.02 (.01)*	.02 (.01)***	.10 (.05) σ	.12 (.04)**
Ideology		5.31 (2.29)*	-5.70 (1.33)***	5.65 (2.43)*	5.81(1.33)***
Freshman		2.5 (.59)**	2.40 (.42)***	2.43 (.58)**	2.41 (.42)***
Party Leader		-2.09 (1.13) σ	-1.84 (1.12)	-2.09 (1.14) σ	-1.82 (1.12)
Previous Vote share		.47 (.03)***	.48 (.01)***	.47 (.03)***	.48 (.01)***
Challenger's Quality		-7.93 (.51)***	-7.56 (.39)***	-7.98 (.51)***	-7.57 (.39)***
Midterm		-3.56 (.86)**	-3.67 (.31)***	-3.55 (.86)**	-3.66 (.31)***
Presidential Approval		.14 (.04)**	.16 (.02)***	.140 (.04)**	.16 (.02)***
Unemployment Rate		.10 (.19)	.10 (.09)	.12 (.19)	.11 (.09)
Log GDP Per Capita		.01 (.12)	.01 (.06)	-.00 (.12)	.01 (.06)
Constant		106.98(27.33)*	110.03(14.85)*	87.35 (21.34)**	91.54 (12.22)***
N	6548	6548	6548	6548	6548
N of Clusters	17	17	17	17	17
R ²	.02	.33		.33	
sd (pcoh)			.02 (.01)		.02 (.01)
sd (cons)			1.72 (.83)		1.79 (.76)
sd (residual)			11.41 (.10)		11.42 (.10)
Chi Square(2)			255.07***		245.76***

Note: σ: p<.1; *: p<.05; **:p<.01; ***:p<.001

Figure 1.2 graphically illustrates the effect of party loyalty using the results in Models II and IV. The lines with a negative slope indicate that for the designated value of the Gini Index, party loyalty is associated with an electoral cost; a legislator who shows a higher level of party loyalty receives a smaller share in the election. A flatter line thus represents a smaller electoral cost of party loyalty. In the left panel, party loyalty is less costly when the Gini Index has a greater value. Although the maximum value of the Gini Index in this dataset is 44, this model predicts that party loyalty could be beneficial to legislators when income inequality is 45 or higher.²² The right panel displays a similar pattern from using the decile ratio to measure income inequality. As the decile ratio increases from 3.6 to 4.8, the line flattens and gains a slight positive slope. The two panels both indicate that the cost of party loyalty decreases as income inequality rises.

Like the key independent variables, most of the control variables affect vote share in the expected way. Across all of the models, the coefficients for *Income Inequality* are significant and negative. Considering the interaction between income inequality and party loyalty, for the legislators with a higher level of party loyalty, the negative effect of income inequality is smaller. This finding is consistent with my theory that a loyal legislator is more favorable to voters when income inequality is higher. The coefficients for legislators' ideology are positive and significant across all the models. According to Carson et al. (2010), ideology may not affect vote shares when party loyalty is included. However, ideology has a positive effect when both it and party loyalty are included in the models. Among the other variables, *Freshman*, *Challenger's Quality*, *Previous Vote Share*, *Midtem* and *Presidential Approval* show significant effects. *Freshman* has

²² For simplicity, the difference in the Gini Index between the lines in the figure is held consistent at 2; this is why I graphed a line for the value 45 instead of the maximum value in my dataset. However, this line is not meaningless, given that 45 is the value of the Gini Index for 2011, and the value for 2012 is slightly higher than 45.

positive and statistically significant coefficients, meaning that a freshman in Congress running for his or her first reelection has some advantage compared to senior legislators. *Challenger's Quality* has a negative and statistically significant effect, confirming the findings in the literature that a legislator facing an experienced challenger receives a smaller share of votes (Jacobson 2004; Carson 2005; Carson et al. 2010). Further, as expected, the vote share received by a legislator in the previous election has a positive effect on the vote share received in the present election. As for *Midterm*, the coefficients show that in-party legislators receive smaller shares of votes in midterm elections than in presidential election years, while out-party legislators receive larger shares of votes in the midterm elections. The positive signs of the coefficients for *Presidential Approval* indicate that a higher presidential approval rate benefits in-party legislators but makes out-party legislators suffer.

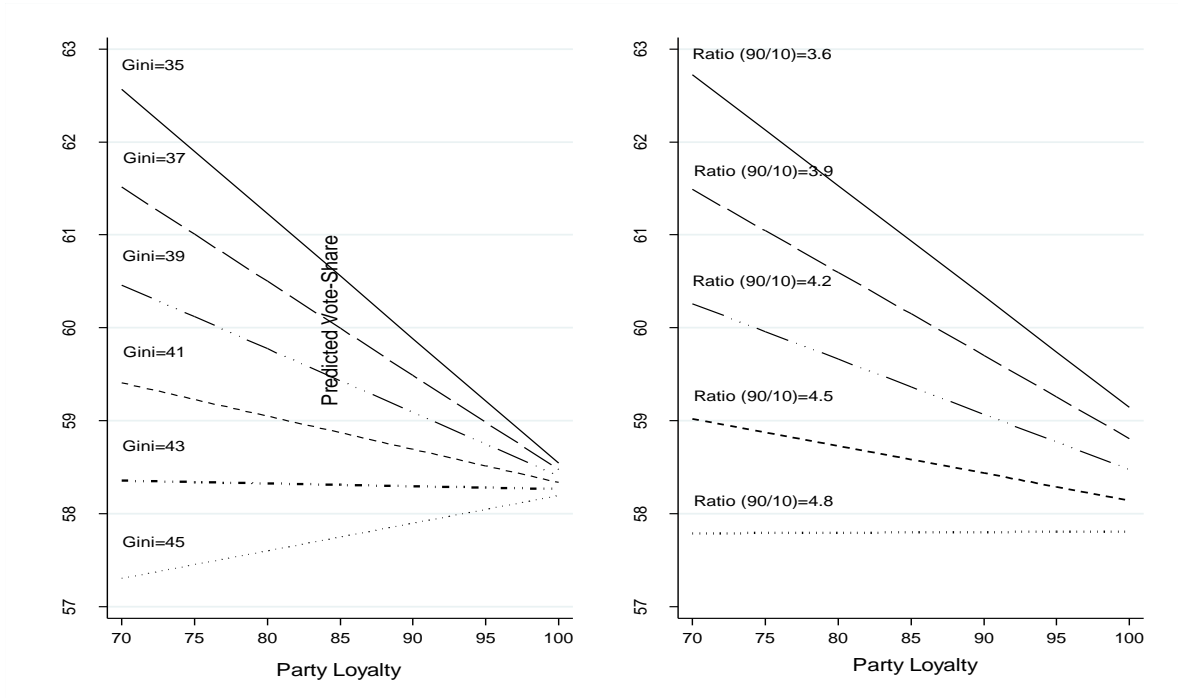


Figure 1.2. The Cost of Party Loyalty, by Income Inequality

Note: Ideology and Previous Vote Share are set at their means; Party Leader and Freshman are set to be 0; Midterm and Quality Challenger are set to be 1; Log GDP and Unemployment rate are set at their means for In-party legislators; Presidential Approval is set to be about 1 point above 50 for In-party legislators.

Three of the control variables are not significant at the .05 level. *Party Leader* is only significant at the .1 level in the pooled models, but the negative signs indicate that being a party leader may indeed shift the focus of a legislator away from serving constituents, which in turn costs him or her votes. The coefficients for the two economic variables are not statistically significant, suggesting that national economic conditions may not affect the vote shares of individual legislators in House elections.

To summarize the findings, the relationship between party loyalty and vote shares is found to be conditional on income inequality. The negative effect of party loyalty on vote share—the electoral cost of party loyalty—is smaller when income inequality is higher. This finding is logically consistent with the increasing trend of party loyalty. In other words, as legislators

increased their party loyalty over the past few decades, the electoral cost incurred by party loyalty was also decreasing due to the rising income inequality.

Robustness

To ensure the robustness of the finding that the electoral cost of party loyalty is conditional on income inequality, I perform additional tests with alternative model specifications below. Overall, the effect of income inequality on the electoral cost of party loyalty is shown to be robust in these models.

Party Polarization and Aggregate Party Loyalty

Party polarization at the elite level took place at the same time as the rise in income inequality and the decrease in the electoral cost of party loyalty. Hence, the effect of income inequality on the electoral cost of party loyalty might result from party polarization among elites. To account for this possibility, I include the variables *Aggregate Party Loyalty* and the *Polarization Index*, which measure party polarization on two different dimensions.²³

First, as previously noted, Bartels (2008) asserted that there are partisan differences in the facilitation of income growth for the rich and poor because the two parties implement different macroeconomic policies. In my view, such partisan differences, if they exist, would manifest when the legislators from the party of the president vote loyally with the party enough that policies that affect income growth can be carried out. In addition, aggregate party loyalty might also affect legislators' vote share by enhancing the informativeness and credibility of the party label. To account for the possibility that aggregate party loyalty might affect both income inequality and vote share, I include the average party loyalty of a given legislator's party for each election year.²⁴ Second, ideological polarization among elites may further affect income

²³ Aggregate party loyalty may show the extent to which the legislators from a party vote together to support the party's position, while the polarization index shows how far one party's position is from the other party's position.

²⁴ As an alternative, I also measured aggregate party loyalty as the average party loyalty of the president's party, and multiplied it by -1 for the legislators from the opposition party in order to account for its different effects on

inequality and how voters view the elites in Congress. I include the Polarization Index that has been applied by McCarty, Poole and Rosenthal (2006) to measure ideological polarization in Congress. Specifically, the index measures the distance between the two parties' median DW-NOMINATE scores in the House; the data is taken from the Voteview.Com.

In Table 1.3, the interaction term remains to be statistically significant after including *Aggregate Party Loyalty* and *Polarization* (Model I). This result suggests that the effect of income inequality is robust to the inclusion of aggregate party loyalty and ideological polarization. Moreover, the relationship between income inequality and the electoral cost of party loyalty does not result from the elites' behavior in Congress.²⁵

Partisanship of Constituencies

Another concern to be addressed is whether the electoral cost of party loyalty is conditional on district partisanship instead of income inequality. Carson et al (2010) have found that district partisanship, measured as the two-party vote share of a given legislator's party in the most recent presidential election, is a condition that may reduce the cost of party loyalty. However, district partisanship and the extent to which a loyal legislator is appreciated would be driven by the same underlying desire for the success of the party. For example, the voters who desire the success of the Democratic Party would support the Democratic presidential candidate, showing stronger partisanship. These voters would also prefer a loyal legislator to a dissenting one, leading to a smaller electoral cost of party loyalty for the incumbent legislator. Therefore, district partisanship

in-party and out-party legislators' vote share. Another alternative measure is the average party loyalty of the president's party without consideration of the party affiliation of legislators. Across these models, the interaction between party loyalty and income inequality remains statistically significant, while the coefficient for aggregate party loyalty fails to reach the conventional level of significance ($p > .05$).

²⁵ I present pooled models here, but the results of random-effect models are not meaningfully different.

and the electoral cost of party loyalty are two sides of the same coin.

A corresponding fact is that district partisanship has risen along with income inequality: when income inequality is higher in a given election year, the average district partisanship is stronger. The average district partisanship increased from 55.24 % in 1976 to 60.19 % in 2008 as the Gini Index increased from 35.80 to 44.00. The correlation between average partisanship and the Gini Index is as high as .90 ($p < .001$). Given that income inequality is largely driven by non-political factors such as technological advancement and globalization, it is very likely that this association is due to income inequality driving the average partisanship up, but not the other way around.

Since district partisanship could be one of the mechanisms linking income inequality to the electoral cost of party loyalty (by means of partisan sorting), including district partisanship in the models would hold constant the factor linking income inequality to the electoral cost of party loyalty. One can easily imagine that the interaction between party loyalty and income inequality would become insignificant when district partisanship is included in the models.

To try to account for the effect of district partisanship, I recode it into a dummy variable denoting the discrete level of partisanship. Partisan District is coded as 1 if a district's partisanship is greater than or equal to the average partisanship of a given election year, and 0 otherwise. Although district partisanship may go hand-in-hand with income inequality, whether a district is heavily partisan may be less determined by income inequality than is the exact presidential vote share of the legislator's party in that district. Thus, including this dummy variable may help account for the effect of district partisanship without completely partialling out the effect of income inequality through district partisanship.

In the pooled model (Model II), the coefficients for income inequality and its interaction with party loyalty are at best significant at the .1 level. However, taking into account the

heterogeneity across election years, in the random-effect model in the third column, the coefficient of the interaction term remains statistically significant. Model IV and Model V show similar results when income inequality is measured by the 90/10 decile ratio. As these models show, the inclusion of district partisanship may hold the mechanism linking income inequality and the electoral cost of party loyalty constant, mitigating the effect of income inequality. However, it can still be observed that the electoral cost of party loyalty is conditional on income inequality.

Table 1.3. Models with More Control Variables

	Model I	Model II	Model III (RE)	Model IV	Model V (RE)
	B (CRSE)	B (CRSE)	B (SE)	B (CRSE)	β (SE)
Loyalty	-.77 (.23)**	-.64 (.28)*	-.62 (.18)**	-.33 (.22)	-.45 (.14)**
Inequality	-1.51 (.89)	-1.37 (.66) σ	1.79 (.92) σ	11.59 (5.99) σ	11.25 (5.57)*
Loyalty×Inequality	.02 (.01)**	.01 (.01) σ	.01 (.01)**	.05 (.05)	.08 (.04)*
Ideology	5.11 (1.96)*	1.37 (2.43)	1.83 (1.35)	1.52 (2.24)	1.93 (1.35)
Freshman	2.44 (.60)**	2.35 (.53)***	2.31 (.41)***	2.35 (.52)***	2.32 (.41)***
Party Leader	-2.12 (1.13) σ	-2.14 (1.12) σ	-1.86 (1.11) σ	-2.08 (1.12) σ	-1.85 (1.11) σ
Previous Vote share	.47 (.03)***	.44 (.03)***	.45 (.01)***	.44 (.03)***	.45 (.01)***
Challenger's Quality	-7.92 (.53)***	-7.49 (.55)***	-7.14 (.39)***	-7.59 (.58)***	-7.15 (.31)***
Partisan District		-3.75 (1.95) σ	-4.59 (1.78)*	-3.13 (2.14)	-4.46 (1.78)*
Loyalty×Partisan District		.09 (.03)**	.10 (.02)***	.09 (.03)**	.10 (.02)***
Aggregate Party Loyalty	-.09 (.23)		.10 (.07)	.18 (.23)	.10 (.07)
Polarization	-2.41 (10.81)		5.41 (15.50)	5.79 (12.26)	2.35 (11.70)
Midterm	-3.50 (.84)**	-3.42 (.92)**	-3.60 (.31)***	-3.50 (.98)**	-3.60 (.31)***
Presidential Approval	.13 (.04)**	.08 (.05)	.11 (.02)***	.09 (.05) σ	.11 (.02)***
Unemployment Rate	.10 (.19)	-.05 (.20)	-.05 (.09)	-.03 (.21)	-.05 (.09)
Log GDP Per Capita	-.00 (.13)	.06 (.13)	.07 (.06)	.07 (.14)	.07 (.06)
Constant	108.71 (33.61)**	97.18 (26.41)**	104.72 (27.40)***	75.71 (26.61)*	82.91 (17.80)***
N	6548	6548	6548	6548	6548
N of Clusters	17	17	17	17	17
R ²	.33	.35		.35	
sd (pcoh)			.03 (.01)		.02 (.01)

Table 1.3 (cont'd)

sd (cons)	1.86 (.83)	1.99 (.75)
sd (residual)	11.26 (.10)	11.26 (.10)
LR test, Chi Square(2)	261.2***	239.98***

Note: σ : $p < .1$; *: $p < .05$; **: $p < .01$; ***: $p < .001$.

Monotonically Rising Income Inequality?

Since income inequality increased roughly monotonically along with the changes in party loyalty and the electoral cost of party loyalty, one might ask whether there is another increasing trend leading to the rise of income inequality and the reduction in the electoral cost of party loyalty.

For several reasons, I do not consider this issue capable of undermining the empirical support for my argument. First, as mentioned previously, income inequality did not increase much until the 1970s, and the correlation between party loyalty and vote share remained negative before income inequality rose to a high level. Therefore, it is highly likely that the rise of income inequality in the 1970s was the driving force behind the changes in the electoral cost of party loyalty. Second, as mentioned, no literature clearly suggests other factors that would simultaneously affect income inequality and the electoral cost of party loyalty. The previous models have shown that including aggregate party loyalty and polarization in the House does not fundamentally change the findings. Furthermore, I have also tested the robustness of the findings by including a time counter, and the effect of income inequality on the electoral cost of party loyalty remains significant.²⁶ Therefore, the relationship between income inequality and the electoral cost of party loyalty is not simply led by other factors or trending. Third, income inequality did not increase monotonically. It ebbed and flowed in income inequality during the

²⁶ Time counter is a variable that ranges from 1 to 17. It is coded as 1 when the observations are from the first election year in this dataset (i.e., 1976), 2 when the observations are from the second election year, and so on.

time under investigation. The regression analyses have gone beyond the prima facie association and demonstrated that the electoral cost of party loyalty is lower (higher) when income inequality is at a higher (lower) level.

Nevertheless, in order to strengthen the empirical support for my conclusion, I conduct a series of analyses using state-level income inequality. In these analyses, the variation of income inequality across states is sufficient to demonstrate that the electoral cost of party loyalty changes across different levels of income inequality.

The data for state-level income inequality is taken from Frank (2009). Frank calculated the Gini Index for each state from 1959 to 2005, and I take the data for each year in which there were House elections between 1976 and 2004.²⁷ Model I in Table 1.4 is the same pooled model as Model II in Table 2, except that income inequality is measured at the state level. The electoral cost of party loyalty is found to be smaller in states with a higher level of income inequality. Model II is a random-effect model showing similar findings. Further, Model III shows that with *Aggregate Party Loyalty* and *Polarization* included, the interaction term between party loyalty and state-level income inequality remains statistically significant.²⁸ Since state-level income inequality varies within each election year, the last model is a fixed-effect model with the variables that are varying within each election year. This model shows that in any given election year, party loyalty is less costly in a state with higher income inequality.

These findings further indicate that the effect of income inequality is not simply due to the prima facie association between the concurrent trends of rising income inequality and falling

²⁷ According to Frank (2009), this measure is calculated using pre-tax income data from the Internal Revenue Service (IRS).

²⁸ In a pooled model with the same specification, the coefficient for the interaction term between party loyalty and state income inequality remains the same but has a p-value equal to .50. This suggests that the effect of income inequality may be mitigated when the heterogeneity across elections years is not taken into account.

electoral cost of party loyalty.

Table 1.4. State-level Income Inequality and the Electoral Cost of Party Loyalty

	Model I	Model II (RE)	Model III (RE)	Model IV (FE)
	B (CRSE)	B (SE)	B (SE)	β (SE)
Loyalty	-.47 (.15)**	-.47 (.12)***	-.38 (.13)**	-.39 (.12)**
State Inequality	-.82 (.28)*	-.74 (.20)***	-.56 (.21)**	-.55 (.20)**
Loyalty×State Inequality	.01 (.00)*	.01 (.00)**	.01 (.00)*	.01 (.00)*
Ideology	6.54 (2.87)*	5.99 (1.44)***	2.17 (1.46)	1.72 (1.47)
Freshman	2.31 (.65)**	2.40 (.45)***	2.32 (.44)***	1.97 (.44)***
Party Leader	-2.35 (1.30) σ	-2.00 (1.23)	-1.90 (1.21)	1.97 (1.22)
Previous Vote share	.47 (.03)***	.48 (.01)***	.44 (.01)***	.44 (.01)***
Challenger's Quality	-8.17 (.54)***	-7.74 (.43)***	-7.33 (.42)***	-7.47 (.42)***
Partisan District			-4.75 (1.87)*	-6.35 (1.95)**
Loyalty×Partisan District			.11 (.02)***	.12 (.02)***
Aggregate Party Loyalty			.16 (.07)*	
Polarization In-Party			-5.87 (5.57)	-1.22 (.16)***
Midterm	-3.04 (.99)**	-3.26 (.36)***	-3.03 (.36)***	
Presidential Approval	.11 (.08)	.15 (.02)***	.08 (.03)**	
Unemployment Rate	-.08 (.29)	.01 (.13)	-.23 (.13) σ	
Log GDP Per Capita	.11 (.20)	.05 (.08)	.17 (.08)*	
Constant	84.56 (15.31)***	80.06 (10.45)***	66.40 (11.87)***	75.85 (10.74)***
N	5764	5764	5764	5764
N of Clusters	15	15	15	15
R ²	.32			
sd (pcoh)		.03 (.01)	.03 (.01)	
sd (cons)		1.48 (.95)	1.72 (.93)	
sd (residual)		11.61 (.11)	11.45 (.11)	

Table 1.4 (cont'd)

LR test, Chi Square	210.69***	201.67***	
Rho			.05

Note: σ : $p < .1$; *: $p < .05$; **: $p < .01$; ***: $p < .001$

Conclusion

Although the rising income inequality is appropriately a cause for concern, ironically, it may lead to a political consequence that has been desired for years by political scientists. As this paper has shown, the electoral cost of party loyalty can be reduced by increases in income inequality, making a responsible party system and a high level of party loyalty in Congress more likely.

Theoretically, based on the literature on the politics of income inequality, I argue in this paper that increases in income inequality may draw the policy preferences of the rich and poor apart, sort people into partisan groups and grant party activists more leverage in elections. As a consequence, voters care more about the success of the party and prefer a loyal legislator to a dissenting one. The empirical analyses show that the cost of party loyalty is smaller when income inequality is at a higher level, and the effect of income inequality is robust to various model specifications.

Due to the limited scope of this research, I have to set aside several interesting research topics. First, party polarization exists not only in the House of Representatives, but also in the Senate (Theriault 2008). Garand (2010) has shown that income inequality at the state level leads to polarization both in the mass and in the Senate. Efforts should be taken to examine the electoral cost of party loyalty for senators and to investigate whether the cost of party loyalty is conditional on income inequality for senators as well. Second, it has been shown that individual voters indeed respond to roll call votes in Congress (Ansolabehere and Jones 2010). Moreover, an individual voter with strong partisanship has lower confidence in a bi-partisan Congress where legislators behave as if no party line is separating them (Harbridge and Malhotra 2011). Combining these studies, my research suggests investigating how income inequality may affect individual voters' attitudes toward legislators' party loyalty. Third, the literature lacks a comparative study covering different countries with various political systems. Party loyalty

recently increased in high-ranking personal-vote systems with competing principals, such as Brazil and Taiwan (Lyne 2008; Sheng 2008). However studying a single-country frees my analysis from the possible complexity resulting from the differences across political systems, it would be interesting if a future study could find similar changes in the electoral cost of party loyalty in those countries.

All in all, if the gap between the rich and poor can not be closed in the near future, we political scientists should be dedicated to further narrowing the gap in our understanding of the political impacts of income inequality.

CHAPTER 2

CLARITY OF RESPONSIBILITY AND CLARITY OF PARTY LINE: THE IMPACTS OF PARTY COHESION ON ECONOMIC VOTING IN THE UNITED STATES, 1980-2008

The paradigm of economic voting examines whether “citizens vote for the government if the economy is doing all right; otherwise, the vote is against” (Lewis-Beck and Stegmaier 2000, 183). In the United States, economy-related factors have been found to be critical conditions that determine electoral outcomes (Fiorina 1978; Fiorina 1981; Hibbs 2000; Kiewit 1983; Nadeau and Lewis-Beck 2001; Tufte 1978). Although economic voting is evident, its existence and strength are found to be contingent (Anderson 2007). Despite a number of studies on the conditionality of economic voting, it has not been fully investigated how economic voting is conditional upon party cohesion. This lack of study is particularly important in regards to contemporary American politics. As intra-party cohesion in Congress has increased to a high level, it remains unclear how high levels of party cohesion affect the extent to which American voters hold the incumbent party accountable for economic conditions.

In the literature, party cohesion has been regarded as the key to having a responsible party system in which voters may be able to hold the incumbent party accountable to the public interest (APSA 1950; Shugart and Carey 1992).²⁹ More specifically, when it comes to economic accountability, Powell and Whitten (1993) maintain that voting cohesion of major governing parties enhances clarity of responsibility and economic voting. However, their research neglects that party cohesion may vary across time and omits opposition party cohesion. The former problem makes their findings far from conclusive, and due to the latter, their theory fails to account for current American politics in which two parties may go hand in hand increasing each other’s levels of intra-party cohesion. In addition to these two deficiencies, it is not clear in their

²⁹ In this paper, the term “incumbent party” refers to the party of the president.

study how party cohesion affects voting behavior at the micro level. There is lack of knowledge about whether individual voters hold the incumbent party accountable for economic conditions as they observe each party acting cohesively in Congress.

The impacts of party cohesion remain puzzling also because several studies indicate that a high level of party cohesion might instead hinder economic voting. First, at the micro-level, it has been found that under the influence of partisan cues, accurately assigning responsibility is not the most important goal to voters (Rudolph 2006). Moreover, partisan cues will have greater influence, and voters will be more likely to act in a partisan manner when elites from each party stand firmly with their in-party members (Levendusky 2009, 2-3). Finally, economic conditions may matter less in determining electoral outcomes when there are more partisan voters (Kayser and Wlezien 2011). By extension, these studies imply that there exists another mechanism through which party cohesion affects economic voting. That is, although it might be the case that voters are able to clearly see the responsibility when each party acts as a unitary actor, a clear party line separating one party from the other could ignite partisan rivalries that shift voters' focus away from economic concerns. The findings from these studies further cast doubt on Powell and Whitten's thesis.

In contemporary American politics, where two cohesive parties continue to engage in party wars (Sinclair 2006), it is likely that an incumbent party could avoid being held accountable for the economy if voters focus on partisan rivalries. For example, before the 2012 presidential election, the Democratic government alleged that the Republicans have waged a "war on women," and the Republicans responded that it's an attempt of the Democrats to dodge the responsibility for economic downturn due to President Obama's policies (Roff 2012). This example shows the possibility that an incumbent party will not be held accountable for the economy if partisan rivalries on controversial issues become the focus of the politics. With the clarity of the party line

left unstudied, the existing literature on economic voting is insufficient to account for the impact of party cohesion on economic voting in current American politics

To shed light on the impacts of party cohesion on economic voting, this paper utilizes the data of time-varying party cohesion in the U.S. House of Representatives and surveys from American National Election Studies (ANES) between 1980 and 2008. Furthermore, instead of focusing solely on incumbent party cohesion, I also include opposition party cohesion into my theory and empirical analysis. I argue that party cohesion is a double-edged sword. On the one hand, increases in party cohesion may enhance clarity of responsibility and economic voting; on the other hand, high levels of incumbent and opposition party cohesion may interactively generate clarity of party line, weakening economic voting. In so doing, this paper may better account for economic voting in current American politics than the previous literature. Through the empirical analyses performed in this paper, I discover the mitigating effect of party cohesion on economic voting that has been concealed in Powell and Whitten's study: high levels of incumbent and opposition party cohesion may interactively contribute to a high clarity of the party line, decreasing the effects of economic perception on the probability of voting for an incumbent party. As the findings will imply, a high level of party cohesion is not as desirable as suggested by the conventional wisdom. Instead, democratic accountability can be hindered by high levels of party cohesion even if the responsibility might be clear. In particular, incumbent parties are less likely to be held accountable for economic performance when parties become cohesive.

The Conventional Wisdom: Clarity of Responsibility

Powell and Whitten's thesis about the effects of party cohesion on economic voting has three components. First, diffusion of responsibility may hinder voter from holding the incumbent party or parties accountable for the economy. Second, a unified control of policymaking can reduce such diffusion of responsibility. Third, voting cohesion of the major governing party serves as a stable feature of political systems that affects the control of policy making and hence economic voting.³⁰ In short, they proclaim that higher levels of incumbent party cohesion enhance clarity of responsibility, which strengthens economic voting (Powell and Whitten 1993, 399-400).

Although Powell and Whitten enriched the studies of economic voting by linking incumbent party cohesion to clarity of responsibility, scholars have found problems with their binary indicator of clarity of responsibility (Anderson 2007; Nadeau, Niemi and Yoshinaka 2002; Royed, Leyden and Borrelli 2000). These follow-up studies take into account the variation in minority status or coalition government, however, none of them investigated the variation of party cohesion and its effects on economic voting. The major problems of the binary indicator are that it overlooks the variation of party cohesion across time within a country and that it assumes all of the countries coded as having weak party cohesion have the same level of party cohesion. Due to the fact that party cohesion varies across time (Canton and Herrnson 1997, 395; Ladewig 2010; Lyne 2008; Sheng 2008; Kam 2009), the impact of party cohesion on economic voting is far from conclusive.

Another problem with their study is that they ignored the role of opposition party cohesion. Incumbent party cohesion alone is not a guarantee for clarity of responsibility. Voters would not

³⁰ The other stable feature is participatory and inclusive committee system in the legislature. In addition, Powell and Whitten provide three varying conditions: bicameral opposition, minority government, coalition governments (Powell and Whitten 1993, 399-402).

be able to see who is responsible if a large number of legislators from the opposition party work with the incumbent party. Therefore, if Powell and Whitten's thesis is true, a high level of opposition party cohesion should also contribute to clarity of responsibility and improve economic voting. Also, if Powell and Whitten's thesis fully accounts for the impact of party cohesion, economic voting should be strongest when both parties have high levels of party cohesion. Without taking into account opposition party cohesion, it remains uncertain whether party cohesion improves economic voting through clarity of responsibility. More importantly, there is a mechanism other than clarity of responsibility linking party cohesion and economic voting if opposition party cohesion is considered. When the legislators from both parties are acting cohesively, people observe two unitary actors and a clear party line in between. As such, even if increases in party cohesion enhance may improve clarity of responsibility, it may simultaneously enhance clarity of the party line. Clarity of responsibility only affects the ability of voters to assign responsibility, but voters may not vote on the basis of that assignment (Hellwig and Samuels 2008). To be clear, while clarity of responsibility enables voters to assign responsibility for poor economic performance, clarity of party line may create a political environment where voters' voting decisions are not mainly based on their perceptions of the economy. Powell and Whitten's thesis tells us one part of the whole linkage between party cohesion and economic voting. Yet, their study fails to account for economic voting in contemporary American politics, where two parties both have high levels of party cohesion.

To fill the gaps in the literature, my research brings the variation of party cohesion across time and opposition party cohesion into the analysis. The findings demonstrate that concurrent high levels of incumbent and opposition party cohesion may interactively generate clarity of the party line, reducing the strength of economic voting.

The Missing Story: Clarity of Party Line

Clarity of party line has been missing in the literature on economic voting. Nevertheless, it should be considered seriously as an important mechanism linking party cohesion and economic voting. Party cohesion in the United States has increased since the 1970s. The variation of party cohesion in Table 2.1 shows not only a rising trend, but also that the two parties both increase their levels of cohesion so as to match each other.³¹ Lebo, McGlynn and Koger (2007) have discovered that the two parties were competing with each other by strategically adjusting their party cohesion. Accordingly, the two parties may concurrently have high levels of cohesion, resulting in a clear party line that separates the two cohesive parties.

Table 2.1. Party Cohesion in the U.S. House of Representatives

Election Year	Incumbent's Cohesion	Opposition's Cohesion	Incumbent Party
1980	72.50	77.00	Democrats
1984	76.34	75.87	Republicans
1988	77.12	81.15	Republicans
1992	78.61	81.78	Republicans
1996	80.02	87.48	Democrats
2000	83.33	86.89	Democrats
2004	90.07	86.14	Republicans
2008	85.96	90.54	Republicans

Note: 1. Party cohesion is measured as the average percentage of a given party's legislators voting with the majority of that party in each roll call vote during a presidential term.
2. The data is taken from voteview.com.

³¹ In Table 2.1, party cohesion for a given party is calculated as the average percentage of a given party's legislators voting with the majority of that party in each roll call vote during a presidential term. For example, if there are 3 roll call votes during a term in which 60%, 95% and 85% of the legislators from a given party voting in one direction, then the cohesion for the that party in this term is $(60+95+85)/3$, namely, 80. The raw data for roll call votes is taken from the Voteview.com.

My theory expects that high clarity of party line may enhance the salience of partisan cues so as to hinder voters from holding the incumbent party accountable for the economy.³² A clear party line may increase the salience of partisan cues through the following mechanisms. First, high levels of party cohesion enhance the informativeness and the credibility of a party label (Ashworth and Bueno de Mesquita 2008; Snyder and Ting 2002). Hence, Messages attached to the party label of a cohesive party has greater influence in determining voting decisions than those attached to one of a party that are not cohesive. Secondly, a clear party line also means that there are fewer bi-partisan policies that may draw cross-party support from the members of the other party.³³ The public then observes a “party war” in which parties more frequently vote down each other’s bills by intra-party collective effort in the committees, as well as on the floor (Sinclair 2006). Consequently, the policies and the legislations are sorted along the party line and become partisan cues. In addition, when there are fewer and fewer dissenting legislators from each party, parties will dominate policymaking process and become the most important political actors that voters can identify with and take messages from. Hence, messages that are not specifically linking to any parties are less available to voters. Finally, due to the proliferation of partisan agendas in Congress, partisan voters are more likely to be mobilized (Hetherington 2001; Bernhardt, Duggan and Squintani 2009). These voters might further provide partisan cues in political discussions.

When a high clarity of party line increases the salience of partisan cues, voters might also become partisan. It is evident that when both parties increased their cohesion, Americans were more and more likely to report themselves as party identifiers during the past four decades

³² Partisan cues are messages that “may reveal party affiliation [...] or link a party to a stand on an issue” (Bullock 2011, 497).

³³ McCarty, Poole and Rothenthal (2006) have pointed out that fewer overlapping of issue positions is a sign of polarization.

(Bartel 2000; Gelmen 2008; Hetherington 2001; McCarty, Poole and Rothenthal 2006). This is because when the party line is clear, voters are more likely to understand “the set of policy positions that accompany being a Democrat or a Republican” and “what it means to be a Democrat or a Republican.” Voters then utilize these clear cues to align their issue positions and partisanship and become “more firmly anchored” to the party (Levendusky 2009, 2-3). Also, in Hetherington’s study, he finds that “if people are exposed to a heavily partisan stream of information, which will be more likely if elites are behaving in a partisan manner, then it follows that respondents will express opinions that reflect the heavily partisan stream” (Hetherington 2001, 622). Accordingly, voters may become partisan after perceiving a clear party line and salient partisan cues.

Evidence shows that voters that become partisan would downplay economic concerns when evaluating the performance of the incumbent party (Borre 1997; Evans and Anderson 2006; Pattie and Johnson 2001). Furthermore, salient partisan cues may also affect the way voters assign responsibility. Rudolph (2006) draws a comparison between accuracy goals and direction goals. The former represent the goals to accurately assign the responsibility for the economic conditions, and the latter are the goals to assign the responsibility in a way that is consistent with party identification. Rudolph shows that accuracy goals become less important than direction goals when partisan cues are present. This study implies that the clarity of responsibility for the economy may be deemphasized when partisan cues are present and clear.³⁴

To summarize, while any increases in either party’s cohesion might enhance clarity of responsibility, they simultaneously improve clarity of the party line. A clear party line that

³⁴ Although Bullock (2010) points out that partisan cues do not necessarily affect opinions better than information about the policies, my theory stresses that when partisan cues are overwhelmingly spread in politics, partisan cues will more effectively reduce the weight of economic perception in voters’ voting decisions.

improves the salience of partisan cues may lead voters to downplay economic concerns in making voting decisions. Accordingly, high levels of party cohesion may weaken economic voting by enhancing clarity of party line. To test this argument, I conduct a series of regression analyses with data from the ANES surveys. These analyses are demonstrating that voters' economic perceptions have a smaller impact on voting intentions when incumbent and opposition party cohesion both increase to a high level.

Regression Analysis

Economic voting can be depicted by the relationship between voters' economic perception and their intentions to vote for the incumbent (Lewis-Beck and Stegmaier 2000; Anderson 2007; Duch and Stevenson 2008). Economic voting exists if a negative (positive) perception leads to a smaller (larger) likelihood to vote for the incumbent. In addition, the strength of economic voting can be measured as the amount of changes in the likelihood of voting for the incumbent party that results from the differences in economic perception.

Accordingly, the dependent variable is *Voting Intentions*, which is a dummy variable denoting whether a respondent intends to vote for the incumbent party in the coming presidential election. The time frame is from 1980 to 2008 in order to accommodate the availability of data for the perception of the economy. In the ANES surveys, respondents are asked, in slightly different terms, about which party they are going to vote for.³⁵ The respondents who were going to vote for the incumbent party in a given year are coded as 1, and 0 otherwise. Given that the dependent variable is binary, the methods of estimation are pooled logit models and random-effect logit models.³⁶

The key independent variable is *Economic Perception*. There are two types of economic perceptions in the literature of economic voting. One is the perception of national economy (a.k.a. socio-tropic evaluation) and the other is the perception of personal financial situation (a.k.a. pocketbook voting). While the perception of national economy has been frequently found as a

³⁵ This is the question asked in pre-election surveys. Using pre-election surveys avoids the possibility that respondents conform their answers to the results of elections.

³⁶ Given the small number of clusters (i.e. 8 election years) in this research, clustered robust standard error is not appropriate (Primo, Jacobsmeier and Milyo 2007). Clustered standard errors are generally smaller than those without considering clusters. As a matter of fact, with cluster robust standard errors, the results are even more supportive to my theory.

valid measure of economic evaluation (Lewis-Beck and Paldam 2000; Kiewiet 1983; Hansford and Gomez 2011), pocketbook voting has also been found in a number of studies (Fiorina 1978; Sigelman, Sigelman and Bullock 1991). I do not choose socio-tropic evaluation in this study because the perception of national economy might be more likely to come from a respondent's approval of the incumbent president or partisanship, leading to colinearity and possible endogeneity. The advantage of using pocketbook evaluation is to get around these methodological issues since personal financial status might reflect many aspects of life that are not endogenous to political factors (Borre 1997; Evans and Andersens 2006). As shown in Table 2.2, in this dataset, approval of the president, partisanship and the intentions to vote for the incumbent party have larger impacts on the perception of national economy than on the perception of personal financial situation.³⁷ Given that the perception of national economy is more likely to be endogenous to the dependent variable and other independent variables, it is better to adopt the perception of personal financial situation in this study.³⁸

³⁷ For example, approval of president only makes about twenty-percent difference (42%-22%) in the percentage of perceiving financial situation as getting worse, while it makes almost forty-percent difference (68.09%-29.09%) in the percentage of perceiving national economy as getting worse.

³⁸ As a further test, I replace the pocketbook perception with the perception of national economy in the same model specifications. The finding is that the conditionality of interest remains when the control variables are not included. This further demonstrates that the perception of national economy is highly correlated with those political attitudes and that the pocketbook voting is an option that is more appropriate for this study.

Table 2.2. The Associations between Variables

	Personal Financial Situation		National Economy	
	Not Worse	Worse	Not Worse	Worse
Approve of president	78.00	22.00	70.13	29.87
Not Approve of president	57.78	42.22	31.91	68.09
In-Party	74.78	25.22	59.70	40.30
Out-Party	64.50	35.50	46.37	53.63
Vote for Incumbent	77.10	22.90	67.79	32.21
Not to vote for Incumbent	60.97	39.03	38.35	61.65

Note: 1. The numbers in the cells are the row percentages. A larger difference between rows in a given column for each variable indicates a larger impact of the row variable on the column variable.
2. The Chi-square tests are significant at .001 level for all the associations.

The data for the perception of personal financial situation is also taken from the ANES surveys. Since 1980, during every presidential election year, the ANES asked questions about whether respondent's financial situation has gotten better or worse over the past year.³⁹ The respondents who answered that their personal financial situation has gotten worse are coded as 1, and 0 otherwise. This way of coding is to accommodate the concern that voters would be more likely to punish the incumbent party for a bad economy than to reward it for a good economy.⁴⁰ Given the way of coding, economic voting exists when this variable has a negative effect—the respondents who perceive their personal financial situation as getting worse are less likely to vote for the incumbent party.

The effect of economic perception is expected to be conditional. In my theory, increases in

³⁹ Because my research is designed mainly to investigate the hypothesis regarding clarity of responsibility for past economic performance, I will focus on retrospective evaluation of economy.

⁴⁰ Similar arguments have been addressed in the literature about asymmetric effects of economy (Bloom and Price 1975).

either party's cohesion to a certain extent may enhance clarity of responsibility and economic voting, while a high level of incumbent party cohesion and opposition party cohesion may interactively enhance clarity of the party line and hinder voters from holding the incumbent party accountable for the economy. In other words, the effect of economic perception is conditioned upon three variables: *Incumbent Party Cohesion*, *Opposition Party Cohesion* and the interaction between these two variables. Such conditionality is being tested by including three interaction terms: *Economic Perception* × *Incumbent Party Cohesion*, *Economic Perception* × *Opposition Party Cohesion* and *Economic Perception* × *Incumbent Party Cohesion* × *Opposition Party Cohesion*. In my theory, when either party's cohesion increases so as to enhance clarity of responsibility, a negative perception of the economy decreases the likelihood of voting for the incumbent party to a greater amount. Accordingly, I expect that the first two interaction terms both have a negative coefficient. The third interaction term is included to capture the idea that *Incumbent Party Cohesion* and *Opposition Party Cohesion* interactively generate a clear party line and constrain economic voting. If so, the negative effect of economic perception should be mitigated by the product of the two parties' cohesion. Therefore, a positive coefficient is expected for the third interaction term.

Both *Incumbent Party Cohesion* and *Opposition Party Cohesion* are measured as the average percentage of a given party's legislators voting with the majority of that party in each roll call vote during a presidential term.⁴¹ The range of party cohesion is from 50 to 100. *Incumbent Party Cohesion* is expected to have a positive effect on an incumbent's electoral fortunes. With a higher level of party cohesion, parties are more likely to keep and improve their records. Parties that are able to keep a good legislative record in carrying out public policies are expected to have a better reputation and a higher chance to win the elections (Cox and McCubin

⁴¹ Please see the details in footnote 3.

1993; Lebo, McGlynn and Koger 2007; Grynaviski 2010). By the same token, *Opposition Party Cohesion* may improve the electoral fortune of an opposition party and reduce the likelihood of voting for the incumbent. Therefore, contrary to *Incumbent Party Cohesion*, *Opposition Party Cohesion* is expected to have a negative effect on the dependent variable.

Several control variables that might also affect the likelihood of voting for the incumbent party are included. First, *In-Party Voter* denotes whether a respondent identifies himself/herself with the incumbent party. It is coded as 1 if a respondent who identifies himself/herself with the incumbent party and 0 otherwise. All else being equal, an in-party voter is more likely to vote for the incumbent.

Presidential Approval is included to control for both the effects of voters' overall evaluation about the governing performance and the advantage of incumbency. The data is taken from an question in the ANES surveys asking whether the respondent approves or disapproves of the current president's handling of his job. The respondents who approve are coded as 1, and 0 otherwise. The respondents who approve of the incumbent president are expected to be more likely to vote for the incumbent party.

Race is another factor influencing voters' voting decisions. Compared to white voters, Non-white voters are typically prone to supporting the Democratic Party. When the Democratic Party is the incumbent party, the non-white respondents are coded as 1; when the Republican Party is the incumbent party, the white voters are coded as 1. All other respondents are coded as 0. This variable is expected to have a positive effect on the likelihood of voting for the incumbent party.

In addition to individual-level factors, I also control some macro-level variables that might affect voting decisions. *Divided Government* is a dummy variable denoting whether an incumbent party is a minority in the House, in the Senate or in both. When there is a divided

government, an incumbent party might shift the blame for bad outcomes to the opposition party. Therefore, this variable is expected to have a positive effect on incumbents' vote shares (Powell and Whitten 1993; Nicholson, Segura and Woods 2002).

Ideological Polarization is measured as the Polarization Scores used by McCarty, Poole and Rothenthal (2006). It is simply the difference between two parties' median DW-Nominate Scores during the term closest to each election year. Although ideological polarization might possibly go hand in hand with high levels of party cohesion, the two variables are essentially different.⁴² Ideological polarization means that two parties take two opposite positions that are both far from the median on the entire spectrum. It does not necessarily mean that the members of this party act cohesively in roll call voting. Ideological polarization among elites might also reinforce the severity of partisan rivalries. It is necessary to include ideological polarization in order to partial out its effect from the impact of party cohesion on economic voting.

On-Going War indicates whether there has been any war in which the U.S. engaged during a presidential term. On-going wars may have two-sided effects. On one hand, wars might reduce the stability of society because human and material resources are used for warfare. On the other hand, wars might also increase the popularity of the incumbent president due to the so-called rally effects (Mueller 1970; Lian and O'neal 1993). In this research, I hypothesize that wars have negative effects on respondents' intention to vote for the incumbent party because wars overall impose costs on the societies that are involved. The evidence in the literature also shows that popular support for a war is reduced as the war continues, and the leaders who are pro-war are more likely to lose power (Frieden, Lake and Schultz 2010, 141-5). In this research, I define war as military engagements authorized by Congress. Such military engagements occurred in 1983 (Lebanon), 1991 (Gulf War), 2001 (Afghanistan) and 2003 (Iraq). Accordingly, respondents in

⁴² Carson et al. (2010) share the same view that party cohesion and ideology are different.

1984, 1992 and 2004 are coded as 1, and 0 otherwise.

Reelection is included to control whether a given election features a sitting president up for reelection. There is a term limit for the U.S. presidents, and hence an incumbent party does not always have a sitting president as a candidate in an election. Sitting presidents may have electoral advantages such as nation-wide name recognition and resources from the government. The successor nominated by the incumbent party may not completely inherit these advantages. Therefore, voters might be more likely to vote for the incumbent party when the presidential candidate of the incumbent party is a sitting president than otherwise.

Findings

The results in Table 2.3 show that the effect of economic perception is conditional upon incumbent party cohesion, opposition party cohesion and the product of the two parties' cohesion. Model I is a pooled model without any control variable included. In this model, all the interaction terms are statistically significant. The interaction between economic perception and either party's cohesion has a negative coefficient, while the interaction between economic perception and the product of two parties' cohesion has a positive coefficient. This indicates that the effect of either party's cohesion on economic voting is offset by the product of two parties' cohesion. In Model II, the results are similar when all variables are included, except that the interaction between economic perception and opposition party cohesion is not significant and that the triple interaction is significant only at the .1 level. Since the effect of party cohesion in my theory may take place through partisanship, Model III excludes partisanship and the coefficients for the interaction terms become significant.

This finding seems to be consistent with Powell and Whitten's thesis. That is, voters are more likely to punish the incumbent party for a poor economic condition when incumbent party

cohesion increases to a high level. However, such an effect is conditional upon the levels of opposition party cohesion. Given that the triple interaction has a positive coefficient, as opposition party cohesion is at a high level, incumbent party cohesion may not enhance economic voting as Powell and Whitten suggested.

The effect of clarity of responsibility can also be tested by looking into the coefficients that are involved with opposition party cohesion. As stated, if clarity of responsibility is the only mechanism linking party cohesion and economic voting, increase in opposition party cohesion should also enhance clarity of responsibility. Although, the coefficient for the interaction between opposition party cohesion and economic perception is not significant at the .05 level, its negative sign suggests that economic voting might be strengthened by opposition party cohesion. However, such an effect is conditional upon incumbent party cohesion given the triple interaction.

The simple interpretation of the coefficients shows that Powell and Whitten's thesis is not fully supported by the empirical findings here. First, it is obvious that the effect of either party's cohesion is conditional upon the cohesion of the other party. Increases in incumbent or opposition party cohesion do not necessarily enhance economic voting. Second, party cohesion is a double-edged sword to economic voting. Although an increase in one party's cohesion may strengthen the effect of economic perception on voting intentions, it simultaneously weakens the strengthening effect of the other party's cohesion on economic voting. Therefore, when either party's cohesion increases to a high level, economic voting can not be further strengthened and will diminish.

Speaking of illustration and interpretation, graphs may function better for non-linear models. Graphically, economic voting can be shown by the differences in probability of voting for an incumbent party between a respondent who has a bad perception about the economy and a

respondent who does not. If economic voting exists, the difference in probability should be negative and statistically significant. In other words, compared to the voters who do not have a negative perception about the economy, the voters who perceive the economy as getting worse should be less likely to vote for the incumbent party. Moreover, such a difference in probability should be larger as economic voting is strengthened. In Figure 2.1, for both in-party voters (the top panel) and out-party voters (the bottom panel), I perform three scenarios where the opposition party cohesion is fixed at the minimum (76), the median (82) and the maximum (91).⁴³ In each scenario, the incumbent party cohesion increases from the minimum (72) to the maximum (90).

⁴³ Note that in-party respondents are the respondents who identify with the incumbent party, and out-party respondents are those who do not identify with the incumbent party.

Table 2.3. Regression Analysis

	Model I	Model II	Model III
	β (SE)	β (SE)	β (SE)
Economic Perception (Worse=1)	53.852 (14.375)***	34.839 (19.374) σ	49.732 (18.196)**
Incumbent Party Cohesion (IC)	.354 (.108)**	-1.989 (.315)***	-1.183 (.291)***
Opposition Party Cohesion (OC)	.208 (.099)*	-2.592 (.322)***	-1.558 (.297)***
IC×OC	-.004 (.001)**	.030 (.004)***	.016 (.004)***
Economic Perception × IC	-.755 (.182)***	-.487 (.247)*	-.678 (.232)**
Economic Perception × OC	-.587 (.172)**	-.376 (.231)	-.553 (.216)*
Economic Perception × IC × OC	.008 (.002)***	.005 (.003) σ	.008 (.003)**
Approve of President's Job (Approve=1)		2.457 (.052)***	2.821 (.049)***
In-Party Voter (yes=1)		1.968 (.054)***	
Race (White=1)		.898 (.063)***	1.146 (.060)***
Ideological Polarization		-8.093 (2.814)**	1.649 (2.587)
On-Going War		-2.794 (.229)***	-2.106 (.208)***
Reelection		1.905 (.191)***	1.399 (.173)***
Divided Government		2.030 (.236)***	.880 (.216)***
Constant		177.432 (24.057)***	109.983 (22.196)***
Number of Cases	14571	14571	14571
Number of Clusters	8	8	8
Pseudo R ²	.030	.398	.322

Note: 1. σ: p<.1; *: p<.05; **:p<.01; ***:p<.001

2. The dependent variable is a dummy variable indicating whether a respondent is going to vote for the presidential candidate from the incumbent party in a given election.

As Figure 2.1 shows, for either in-party or out-party voters, the differences in probability made by economic perception do not consistently increase as the incumbent party cohesion increases. This means that economic voting is not necessarily strengthened by the increases in incumbent party cohesion. More specifically, economic voting is enhanced only when incumbent

party cohesion increases from a low to mid level; however, the strength of economic voting decreases as incumbent party cohesion continues to increase from a mid level to a higher one. Furthermore, when the opposition party cohesion is set at the maximum (91), economic perceptions do not make significant differences across all levels of incumbent party cohesion. This result suggests that regardless of the levels of incumbent party cohesion, economic voting is obscured when a high level of opposition party cohesion makes the product of two parties' cohesion large enough to hinder economic voting. These findings do not fully support Powell and Whitten's thesis. Increases in incumbent party cohesion may enhance clarity of responsibility and strengthen economic voting only when incumbent party cohesion increases from a low to mid level. However, when incumbent party cohesion is at a high level, economic voting is not further enhanced by an increase in party cohesion. Instead, voting intentions are less affected or not affected by economic perceptions when there is a cohesive incumbent party, especially when the opposition party is also cohesive.

The effect of opposition party cohesion is similar. Since the differences in probability are not significant when incumbent party cohesion is held at its lowest and highest level, and due to the limited space, I only present a graph in which incumbent party cohesion is held at its median (78) as the opposition party cohesion increases from its minimum (76) to maximum (90). In Figure 2.2, for both in-party voters (the left panel) and out-party voters (the right panel), when the opposition party cohesion increases from a low to mid level, economic voting is strengthened; while the strength of economic voting diminishes as the opposition party cohesion continues to increase from a mid level. This finding is different from what is found in the interpretation of regression coefficients. However, in regards to a non-linear model, looking into the predicted probabilities may offer a better understanding of the relationship between variables. Previous studies of economic voting have long neglected the role of opposition party cohesion, while I

find that it matters in improving clarity of responsibility and economic voting as opposition party cohesion increase from a low to mid level. Furthermore, such an effect is mitigated by the product of incumbent party cohesion and opposition party cohesion and diminishes as either party's cohesion increases to a high level.

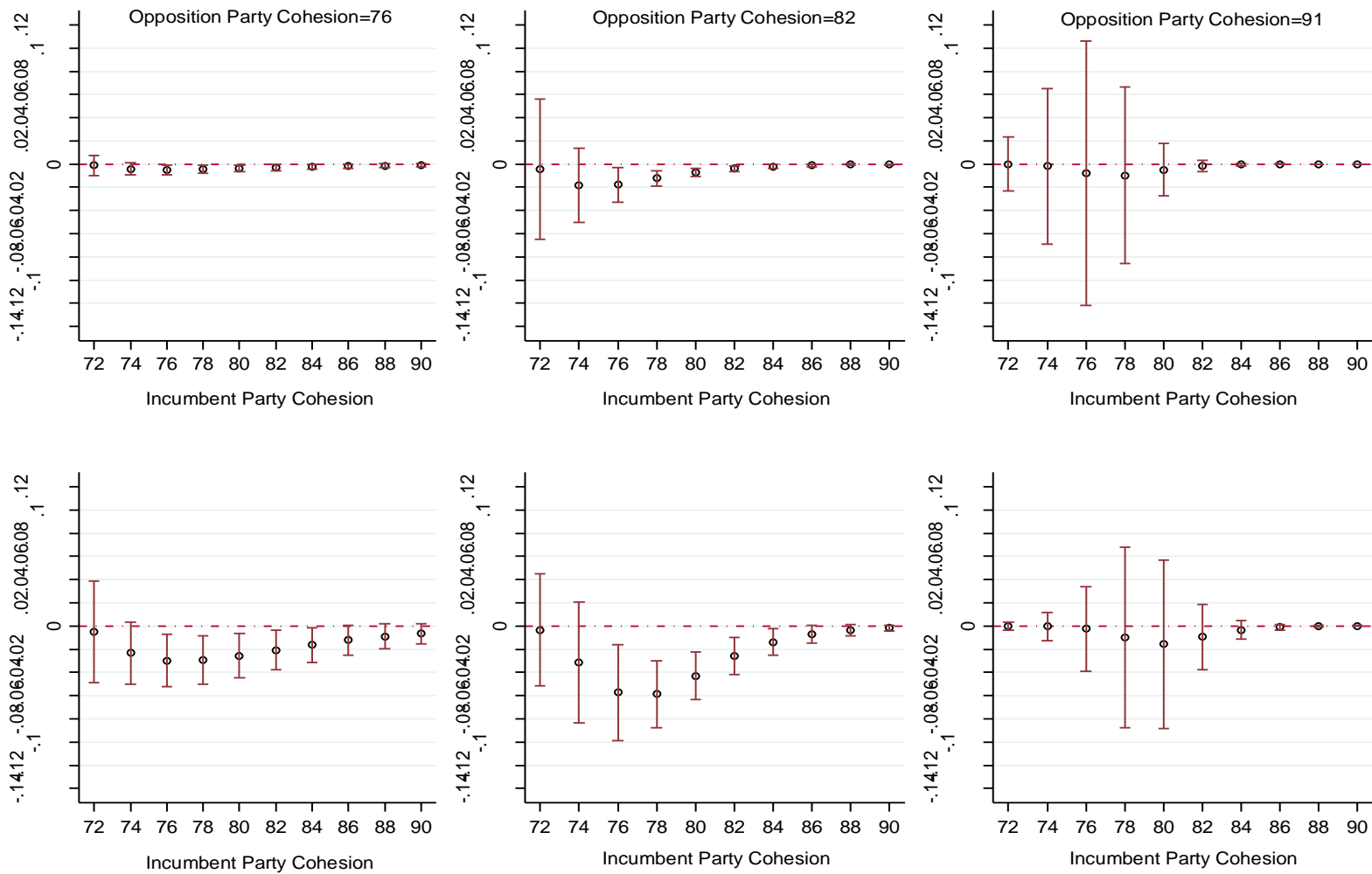


Figure 2.1. Incumbent Party Cohesion and Economic Voting

Note: 1. The y-axis is the probability that the respondents who perceive national economy as getting worse vote for the incumbent party minus the probability that the respondents who do not have the same perception vote for the incumbent party.
 2. The other variables: Approval=1, On-Going War=0, Divided Government=1, Reelection=1, Polarization=mean.

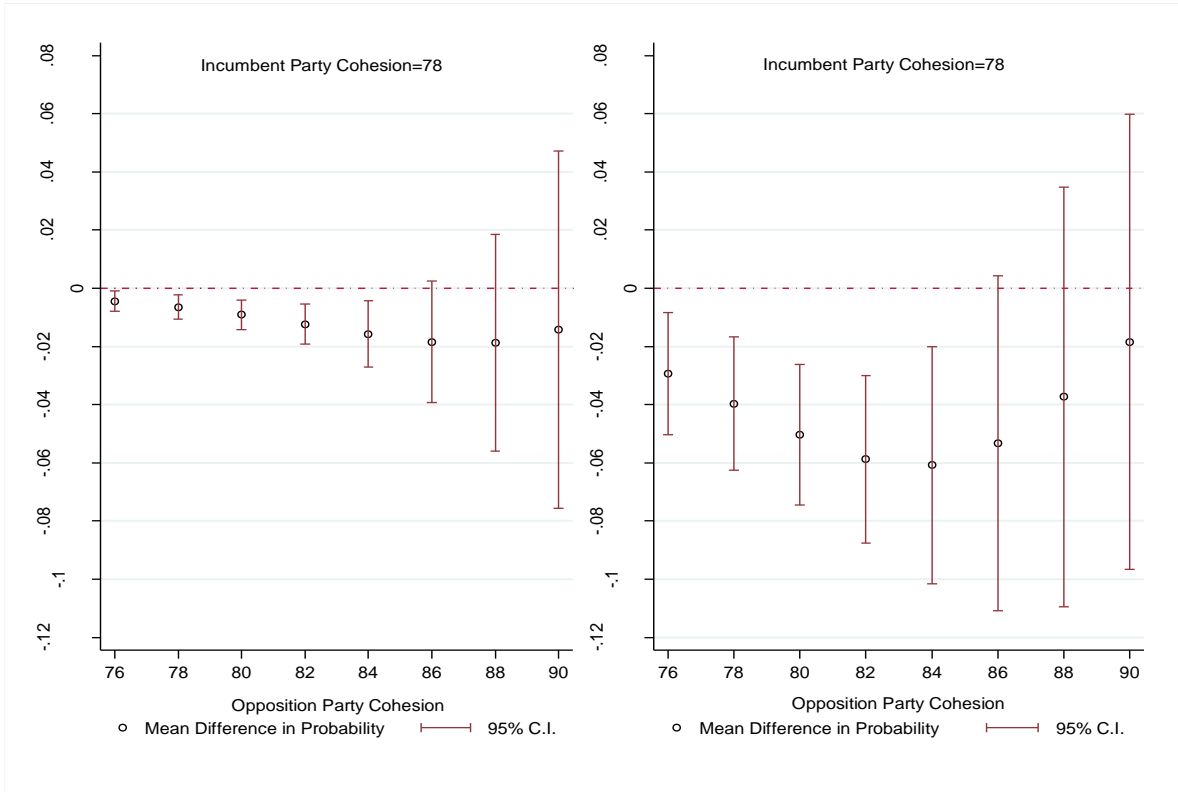


Figure 2.2. Opposition Party Cohesion and Economic Voting

Note: 1. The y-axis is the probability that the respondents who perceive national economy as getting worse vote for the incumbent minus the probability that the respondents who do not have the same perception.
 2. The other variables: Approval=1, On-Going War=0, Divided Government=1, Reelection=1, Polarization=mean.

In sum, the interpretation of regression coefficients and graphical illustrations offer three findings about the relationship between party cohesion and economic voting. First, increases in party cohesion do not necessarily enhance economic voting. The effect of one party's cohesion on economic voting is smaller when the other party's cohesion increases. Second, due to the interaction between the two parties' cohesion, party cohesion is a double-edged sword to economic voting. Although an increase in either party's cohesion enhances economic voting, the strengthening effect of the other party's cohesion on economic voting is simultaneously mitigated. Consequently, economic voting is strengthened when party cohesion increases from a low to mid level, while it is weakened when party cohesion is at a high level. Third, as an

extension of the previous two findings, when both parties have a high level of party cohesion, economic voting diminishes to none.

In addition to the findings of theoretical interest, the effects of each party's cohesion on voting intentions are worth discussion. The effect of incumbent party cohesion on the log-odds is the linear combination of the coefficients for *Incumbent Party Cohesion* and the three interaction terms. The effect of one-unit increase in incumbent party cohesion on voting intention is calculated as $-1.989 + .030 \times \textit{Opposition Party Cohesion} - .487 \times \textit{Economic Perception} + .005 \times (\textit{Economic Perception} \times \textit{Opposition Party Cohesion})$. Looking at these coefficients, for the respondents who do not perceive their financial situation as getting worse (a.k.a. *Economic Perception=0*), the linear combination is positive when opposition party cohesion is 70.74 and above. Meanwhile, for the respondents who perceive financial situation as getting worse (a.k.a. *Economic Perception=1*), the linear combination is positive if opposition party cohesion is greater than 66.31. Thus, as long as opposition party is greater than 74.00, incumbent party cohesion has a positive effect on the likelihood of voting for the incumbent party, regardless of voters' economic perceptions. Since opposition party cohesion in this dataset is never lower than 70.74, the evidence here shows that incumbent party cohesion improves the electoral fortune of the incumbent party. Moreover, this finding suggests that incumbent party cohesion benefits the incumbent party only when opposition party cohesion is high enough. Voters may prefer a cohesive incumbent party when the opposition party is also cohesive, while increases in party cohesion are not beneficial to the incumbent party cohesion if the opposition party is not cohesive.

The effect of opposition party cohesion on voting intentions is conditional upon economic perception and incumbent party cohesion. The linear combination of the coefficients is calculated as $-2.592 + .030 \times \textit{Incumbent Party Cohesion} - .376 \times \textit{Economic Perception} + .005 \times (\textit{Economic$

Perception × Incumbent Party Cohesion). For the respondents who do not perceive their financial situation as getting worse (a.k.a. *Economic Perception=0*), the linear combination of coefficients for opposition party cohesion is negative when incumbent party cohesion is lower than 84.80; for the respondents who perceive financial situation as getting worse (a.k.a. *Economic Perception=1*), the linear combination of coefficients is negative when incumbent party cohesion is lower than 86.40. Therefore, for most of the cases, increases in opposition party cohesion may bring troubles to the incumbent's electoral fortune, especially when the incumbent party has weak party cohesion. However, opposition party cohesion could possibly improve the electoral fortune of an incumbent party when the incumbent party has a high level of cohesion. Increases in opposition party cohesion might provide more opportunities for a cohesive incumbent party to shift the blame to the cohesive opposition party and to attribute the unfavorable governing performance to severe partisan rivalries.

The findings for the effects of incumbent and opposition party cohesion on the electoral fortunes of an incumbent party are roughly consistent with what has been found by Lebo, McGlynn and Koger (2007). That is, it is electorally beneficial for a party to increase its cohesion as the other party becomes cohesive. However, the evidence here suggests that an opposition party will suffer if it increases cohesion when facing a cohesive incumbent party.

Most of the control variables affect voting intentions in the anticipated way, and their coefficients are significant at the conventional level ($p < .05$). The respondents who align with the incumbent party are more likely to vote for that party. These respondents include those who identify themselves with, share the same ideology with or are in a racial group traditionally supporting the given incumbent party, as well as those who approve of the president. Among the macro-level variables, as expected, on-going war reduces the likelihood of voting for the incumbent. Additionally, voters in an election year when there is a sitting president or when there

is a divided government are more likely to vote for the incumbent party. Finally, ideological polarization has a negative coefficient. This means that ideological polarization may lead to voters' resentment toward the incumbent party. It is worth further investigating why an incumbent party would suffer when parties become more ideologically polarized. In my view, voters might have a general resentment toward ideological extremism, and thus they resent the current governing party in Washington.

To conclude this section, two findings are worth being stressed again. First, contrary to the expectation from the conventional theory, the strength of economic voting does not necessarily increase with incumbent party cohesion. Powell and Whitten's argument that a higher level of incumbent party cohesion enhances economic voting is sustained only when incumbent party cohesion increases from a low to mid level. Their thesis loses its validity when incumbent party cohesion is at a high level. Second, increases in incumbent party cohesion may not only enhance clarity of responsibility but also clarity of party line. The regression analyses and the graphical illustrations have shown that when incumbent party cohesion and opposition party cohesion are both at a high level, the clarity of a party line weakens the effect of economic perceptions. This finding implies that when both parties increase their levels of cohesion, the strength of economic voting diminishes.

Discussion

There has been a consensus that economic voting is contingent, however, it remained unclear how economic voting changes with party cohesion across time. Unlike the previous literature on economic voting, this paper takes into account the variation of party cohesion across time and opposition party cohesion. It demonstrates that a high level of party cohesion does not improve economic voting and shed new light on the studies of economic voting.

Overall, the findings in this paper do not support Powell and Whitten's thesis. If clarity of responsibility is the only mechanism driving the relationship between party cohesion and economic voting, increases in either incumbent or opposition party cohesion should make responsibility clearer and then enhance economic voting. Furthermore, when both parties have the highest level of party cohesion, and there is no cross-party voting in Congress, the clarity of responsibility should be also at the highest level. Accordingly, economic voting should be strongest if both parties' cohesion is at their maximum level. However, these theoretical expectations are not supported by the empirical evidence here. Instead, the evidence suggests that clarity of responsibility only explains one part of the relationship between party cohesion and economic voting. Increases in party cohesion not only enhance clarity, but also make the party line between two parties clearer. When party cohesion is at a high level, the high clarity of party line increases the salience of partisan cues, hindering voters from holding the incumbent party accountable for economic conditions.

The findings in this paper have important implications for understanding contemporary American politics. In contemporary American politics, the Democratic Party and Republican Party act cohesively in Congress to vote down each other's bill (Sinclair 2006). Moreover, as Lebo, McGlynn and Koger (2007) have pointed out, the two parties adjust their cohesion in order to compete with each other. My study accounts for these developments and demonstrates how

they influence economic accountability in the U.S. As the two parties engage in party wars, voters are likely to downplay their economic concerns in making their voting decisions. Incumbent parties may thus have leeway to avoid from being held accountable for economic conditions. Additionally, the findings for the effect of party cohesion on voting intentions also suggest that when competing with a cohesive opponent, a higher level of party cohesion makes a party better off in terms of its electoral fortunes. In other words, it is generally in a party's interest to increase its internal cohesion in order to gain electoral benefits if the other party also becomes cohesive. Thus, it can be expected that the party wars between the two parties will continue to be one of the most significant features of American politics.

Additionally, it has been found that economic voting is dependent upon voters' partisanship. The effect of economic perceptions on voting intentions is smaller for voters who identify with the given incumbent party than that for other voters (Borre 1997; Evans and Andersen 2006). This paper supports this view. In the graphical illustrations, compared to incumbent party identifiers, the probability of voting for the incumbent party among those who are not incumbent party identifiers is less affected by economic perceptions. Additionally, this paper discovers that the effect of economic perceptions can be further conditioned by clarity of party line, regardless of voters' partisanship. This implies that economic concerns are downplayed by all voters as the partisan rivalries among elites escalate.

Several potential topics for future research can be extended from this paper. First, although it is questionable whether voters look into legislators' voting record on specific issues, it would be worth investigating how party cohesion, with respect to economic policies, affects economic voting. The levels of party cohesion in roll call votes specifically related to economic issues may have a greater impact on the clarity of responsibility for the economy than by the party cohesion in all roll call votes. A study that dissects party cohesion in different areas of policies may further

discover the effects of party cohesion on economic accountability.

Secondly, a comparative study of the relationship between party cohesion and economic voting may generalize the findings here to other democracies. Evidence shows that party cohesion in countries that have had low levels of party cohesion, such as Brazil and Taiwan, has increased recently (Lyne 2008; Sheng 2008); while others that had a high level of party cohesion, such as the United Kingdom, have sometimes experienced low levels of party cohesion (Kam 2009). If data for party cohesion is available, a comparative study would enrich the understanding of the conditioning effect of party cohesion on economic voting.

Methodologically, endogeneity is worth further investigation. The issue of endogeneity results from a possibility that subjective economic perception might be influenced by voting decisions. That is, a respondent perceives the economy as getting worse simply because he or she is going to vote for the opposition party. A traditional solution to endogeneity is to use instrumental variables. Lewis-Beck, Nadeau and Elias (2008) uses the variables in surveys, such as race, gender, age, interest in politics and so on, to construct their instrument variable for economic perception. They find that the effects of economic perception turn out to be higher when using their instrumental variable. However, some of the variables that they use to construct the instrument variable have direct relations to voting intention, and the others are not truly exogenous. Thus, their instrumental variables might not really solve the problem of endogeneity. Hansford and Gomez (2011) use local economic conditions as instrumental variables, however, the R-square in their first-stage model is small, suggesting that local economic conditions might not serve as good instrumental variables for voters' perceptions about national economy. In addition, using local-level variables as an instrument for individual-level perceptions might induce a concern about ecological fallacy. Ecological fallacy could be induced by using variables at the macro level to represent variables at the micro level. In my study, with partisanship and

presidential approval included in the regression analyses, I have to some extent eliminated the possibility that voting intentions affect economic perceptions through variables that might reflect voting intentions. Further, in comparison to socio-tropic perception, pocketbook perception more involves the aspects of personal life that are exogenous to politics. Adopting the perception of personal financial situation puts this research in an advantageous position to claim that voting intentions would not have a large impact on the perception of personal financial situation.

Conclusion

Powell and Whitten (1993) assert that a cohesive governing party enhances economic voting by increasing clarity of responsibility. The doubts surrounding this thesis come from its failures to take into account the within-country variation of party cohesion and to account for other possible mechanisms. The former makes the thesis questionable because the salience of economic voting in a country where the party cohesion is presumably high might occur when the party cohesion is actually at a low level; the latter theoretically provides a rival hypothesis that higher levels of party cohesion may result in a clearer party line, which hinders economic voting.

Contrary to Powell and Whitten, I argue that high levels of party cohesion may hinder voters from holding the incumbent party accountable for the economy. This occurs especially when both the incumbent party and the opposition party have high levels of cohesion, which interactively enhance the clarity of the party line. My argument is different from theirs in two aspects. First, party cohesion conditions economic voting, not only through clarifying the responsibility for the economy, but also through clarifying the line that separates the two parties. The former clarity enables voters to know who should be responsible for the poor economic outcomes and hence makes economic voting more likely. The latter, however, leads to the salience of partisan cues and draws the focus of voters away from holding the incumbent party accountable for the economy. Therefore, increases in party cohesion may both enhance and hinder economic voting. From this perspective, party cohesion is a double-edged sword to economic voting. Second, while Powell and Whitten only theorize incumbent/governing party cohesion, I suggest that incumbent and opposition party cohesion should both be considered in testing the theory of clarity of responsibility. I also theorize that incumbent party cohesion and opposition party cohesion may interactively condition economic voting. Due to such an interaction, increases in one party's cohesion do not necessarily enhance economic voting.

Further, when the two parties both have high levels of party cohesion, the high clarity of the party line hinders economic voting.

This paper has made two major contributions. First, with the time-varying nature of party cohesion considered and included into statistical models, this paper enriches our understanding of how economic voting varies with the ebbs and flows of party cohesion. Economic voting is strengthened as incumbent party cohesion increases from a low to mid level. However, economic voting diminishes with incumbent party cohesion when incumbent party cohesion is already at a high level. Second, the evidence in this paper demonstrates that opposition party cohesion and the interaction between two parties' cohesion affect the strength of economic voting. In particular, this paper shows that when two parties both become cohesive, voters are less likely to hold incumbent party accountable for the economic conditions. When the Democrats and Republicans both have high levels of intra-party cohesion, this paper provides useful information about how party wars between the two parties influence economic accountability in the United States.

In 1950, the American Political Science Association (APSA) issued a well-known calling for moving toward a responsible party system which stresses the need for cohesive parties (American Political Science Association 1950). Since this report was issued, it has been believed that party cohesion is the key to making government accountable to the public interest (Shugart and Carey 1992; Carey 2009). Powell and Whitten's paper is in line with this belief. However, my research provides counter-evidence. That is, high levels of party cohesion enhance clarity of party line, hindering voters from holding the incumbent party accountable for economic conditions. Rae (2007) has reminded us to "Be Careful What We Wish For" when observing the severe rivalries between two cohesive parties in contemporary American politics. My research echoes Rae's calling and suggests that as far as economic accountability is concerned, democracies should be careful in the pursuit of high levels of party cohesion.

CHAPTER 3

RESIST BEING HELD ACCOUNTABLE: THE IMPACTS OF PARTY COHESION ON CONCENTRATION OF VOTES IN THE UNITED STATES

Ideally, “governments are accountable if voters can discern whether governments are acting in their interest and sanction them appropriately, so that those incumbents who act in the best interest of citizens win reelection, and those who do not lose them” (Manin, Przeworski and Stokes 1999, 40). Such accountability would not exist if incumbents are still able to win reelection without performance approval from a broad range of citizens. In other words, lack of accountability occurs when incumbents have the ability to resist being held accountable by the public. In this research, such ability is called “Resistibility.”

In studies of accountability, resistibility may come from particularistic vote-interest exchanges between the incumbents and certain subsets of citizens. When such an exchange prevails, politicians are held accountable neither for the “success in delivering *collective goods*,” nor for “improving overall distributive outcomes along the lines favored by *broad categories of citizens*” (Kitschelt and Wilkinson 2007, 2). In other words, by serving particularistic goods to earn sufficient votes from certain subsets of the electorate, politicians may have leeway to avoid being held accountable for the overall performance in serving the public interest.

It has been argued that the problems led by particularistic exchanges can be solved or mitigated by high levels of party cohesion. Since a party has to provide programmatic national policies that are broad enough in order to win national elections, a high level of cohesion not only indicates that narrow-scope services are less likely to be offered, but also enable a party to carry out policies that target a broad range of constituencies. Therefore, there has been a belief that high levels of party cohesion help create programmatic politics in which a universal interest of the national electorate can be served and a cohesive governing party can be held accountable

collectively for their programmatic policies (American Political Science Association 1950; Cox 1987; Shugart and Carey 1992).

It seems logically plausible that party cohesion would constrain particularistic exchanges and improve accountability. However, empirically, it remains untested whether increases in party cohesion improve the ability of the public to hold politicians accountable. Franzese, Jusko and Nooruddin (2007) show that when party cohesion is higher, the number of effective constituencies shrinks to be less than the number of geographic districts, meaning that local concerns are reduced by the rise in party cohesion. As a result, spending that is geographically targeting is also reduced.⁴⁴ Although their research provided some evidence that party cohesion may reduce the geographically targeted spending, it is not clear whether the reduction of spending is due to even narrower targeting of particularistic services, rather than a shift from particularistic exchanges to broad categories of services.

Theoretically, while a high level of party cohesion could provide the opportunity to serve a broad constituency, the party may not have the incentive to do so. The incentive of vote maximization does not necessarily translate into seeking maximization in every sub-unit of the districts; rather, parties may target disproportionately larger shares of votes from particular subsets of the electorate. Given that serving the public is difficult, a cohesive party may instead have the incentive to target particular sets of voters and secure the base of support. McGillivray (1997; 2004) has pointed out that the incumbent party with stronger party discipline is more likely to use trade and industrial policies to target certain subsets of the voters. As such, increasing party cohesion in order to improve accountability would backfire. An incumbent party

⁴⁴ According to Franzese, Jusko and Nooruddin (2007), the effective number of constituencies is a linear combination of geographic district and party cohesion. As party cohesion increases, the number of effective constituencies decreases, and they argue that the particularistic spending will therefore be reduced.

with a higher level of party cohesion could be more capable of carrying out policies to target particular subsets of voters.⁴⁵ In return, these targeted constituents would be more likely than others to vote for the incumbent party, leading to a higher concentration of votes. A higher concentration of votes means that there are disproportionately larger shares of votes may cover the losses from the entire constituency. Increases in party cohesion may consequently strengthen the incumbent party's resistibility.

Given the two contradictory arguments, a straightforward way to investigate the impact of party cohesion on resistibility is to directly examine the relationship between party cohesion and the concentration of votes. In the existing literature, it is not a new idea that the concentration of votes indicates the prevalence of particularistic exchanges. For example, Batto (2005) considers that a higher concentration of votes is evidence of rent-seeking or pork-barreling activities. Lynn (2008) also suggests that "when votes are won on the basis of policy goods, leading candidates' votes will be more evenly distributed across the district's units or blocs" (Lynn 2008, 88). Lynn's study has even provided some findings regarding the relationship between party cohesion and the concentration of votes for Brazilian deputies. While she finds that the concentration of votes is lower in the era when party cohesion is higher, her tests fail to fully capture the relationship between party cohesion and concentration of votes. The first deficiency is that her comparison between two periods of time did not show the effect of every one-unit increase in party cohesion on the concentration of votes. Secondly, a high concentration of votes means that votes are not spread evenly across the entire constituency. However, her measurement of the concentration of votes, the Dominance Score, could have a larger value when a candidate in fact receives large but evenly distributed shares of votes. In other words, the Dominance Score might indicate a high concentration of votes when the votes are not concentrated. It does not validly distinguish

⁴⁵ In this paper, an incumbent party is the party of the president of the United States.

between a high and low concentration of votes.⁴⁶ Due to these weaknesses in her tests, the relationship between party cohesion and the concentration of votes is not conclusive.

With data for party cohesion in the U.S House of Representatives and presidential elections from 1992 to 2012, this paper attempts to test how concentration of votes varies with party cohesion across time. I adopt Batto's measurement of the concentration votes, which is arguably better than other measurements adopted in the literature. Additionally I take a step further to test whether a high concentration of votes improves the chance of winning elections for an incumbent party.⁴⁷ In a nutshell, the statistical analyses will provide evidence that a higher level of party cohesion helps the incumbent party resist being held accountable for the public interest.

Party cohesion is a key element of a responsible party system, and high levels of party cohesion have been traditionally seen as improving accountability (APSA 1950; Cox 1987). However, as this paper will show, a high level of party cohesion contributes to the concentration of votes. Increases in party cohesion may facilitate the exchanges between the parties and particular subsets of voters, leading to a stronger resistibility of the ruling party.

⁴⁶ The Dominance Score for a candidate in a district used by Lynn is the weighted average of vote shares in all the municipalities within that district. The weight for each municipality is the number of votes that a given candidate receives in a given municipality divided by the number of total votes received by that candidate in all municipalities of a district. Therefore, a greater dominance score could mean either votes being concentrated or a strong candidate winning equally large vote shares in all the municipalities.

⁴⁷ In this paper, the term "incumbent party" refers to the party of the president.

Party Cohesion and Concentration of Votes

Party cohesion is the extent to which the legislators of a party vote with the party in Congress. A high level of party cohesion indicates that most, if not all, legislators of a party vote in the same manner on policies. Thus, with high levels of party cohesion, incumbent parties may have better chances to carry out policies in their favor.

These policies can be particularistically targeting. Whenever a party carries out a policy, the party to some extent knows where the support and opposition will come from, and the party needs to evaluate the electoral impact of the policy. As such, a cohesive party may carry out policies that serve particular subsets of voters to optimize their electoral gains and losses. In return, the benefited voters would give disproportionately larger support to the incumbent parties, leading to a high concentration of votes.

To be sure, it is not a new idea that policies in favor of particular sets of voters are more likely to be produced when party cohesion is at a high level. McGillivray (1997; 2004) shared this view and argued that a strong party discipline may enable an incumbent party to produce trade and industrial policies that targets certain districts of constituencies. Furthermore, other studies suggested that a strong party and partisanship may prevent parties from reaching compromises (Rae 2007; Gerring, Thacker and Moreno 2009). For one reason, a high level of party cohesion enhances the leverage of the majority party to unilaterally determine the legislative outcomes; for another, high levels of party cohesion in the U.S. have led to a party war where policies that might draw cross-party support have diminished in quantities (Sinclair 2006). As a result, policies would be more biased toward some subsets of voters when incumbent party cohesion is at high levels.

In the U.S., the Republican Party and the Democratic Party traditionally have policies that serve different subsets of the electorate, leading to different base of support for the two parties.

According to Axelrod, the Republicans received support from the non-poor, whites, nonunion families, Protestants, northerners and voters outside of the central cities; while the Democrats had been supported by the poor, blacks, unions, Catholics, southerners and the central cities (Axelrod 1972, 15-6). In addition, the differences in the bases of support can also be geographically distributed. The north-south division is a typical example. Furthermore, traditionally the Democrats receive support from urban areas and the areas with larger percentages of immigrants and blacks (Stonecash, Brewer and Mariani 2003). It is believed that the Democrats' liberal policies on civil rights, immigration, gay marriage, abortion and other issues have attracted the people living in urban areas and big cities. In sum, the two major parties have different bases of support, and the social-racial base of support can also be geographically distributed.

The geographically distributed base of support can vary with party cohesion. With a high level of party cohesion, an incumbent party may have more leverage to carry out policies in favor of the voters in some particular areas. As a consequence, the base of support should be narrower, assuming that those benefited voters would be more likely than other citizens to vote for the incumbent party in return. Conversely, when the legislators of an incumbent party do not vote cohesively in Congress, the incumbent party has to negotiate with individual legislators and the opposition party. Thus, the range of the benefited voters would be broader. In short, a higher level of party cohesion would lead to a narrower range of support for the incumbent party, and vice versa.

To test the association between party cohesion and the concentration of votes, I collect data for the state-level concentration of votes and incumbent party cohesion from 1992 to 2012. The state-level concentration of votes is calculated with the incumbent party's presidential votes

disaggregated by congressional districts.⁴⁸ I adopt Batto (2005)'s measure of concentration, which is based on the chi-square statistic and accounts for theoretical range of concentration for each party given its constituency-wide vote total (Batto 2005, 49). The advantage of Batto's measurement over the standard deviation of vote shares is that it is adjusted by the theoretical maximum concentration of each state.⁴⁹ This adjustment avoids the possibility that the variation in the concentration of votes comes from intrinsic characteristics of the electoral competition in each state and election. To measure incumbent party cohesion, I take the percentage of the members of a given incumbent party that forms the majority of the party in each roll call vote, and I calculate average for each presidential term.⁵⁰ The record of each roll call vote is taken from Voteview.com.

As Figure 3.1 shows, when party cohesion started to arise, the average concentration of votes also increased. Thus, the *prima facie* association shows that the concentration of votes increased with party cohesion. The conventional wisdom that party cohesion may constrain the concentration of votes is not supported by the empirical association here.

⁴⁸ National concentration of votes means using presidential votes in each congressional districts to calculate a single value of concentration of votes for each election year; Average state-level concentration of votes means using presidential votes in each congressional districts to calculate a value of concentration of votes for each state and then taking the average value of all states for each election year.

⁴⁹ Please see the appendix for the details of the measurement.

⁵⁰ For instance, .50 means on average 50 percents of the members from the given incumbent party vote in the same direction in all the roll call votes during a presidential term.

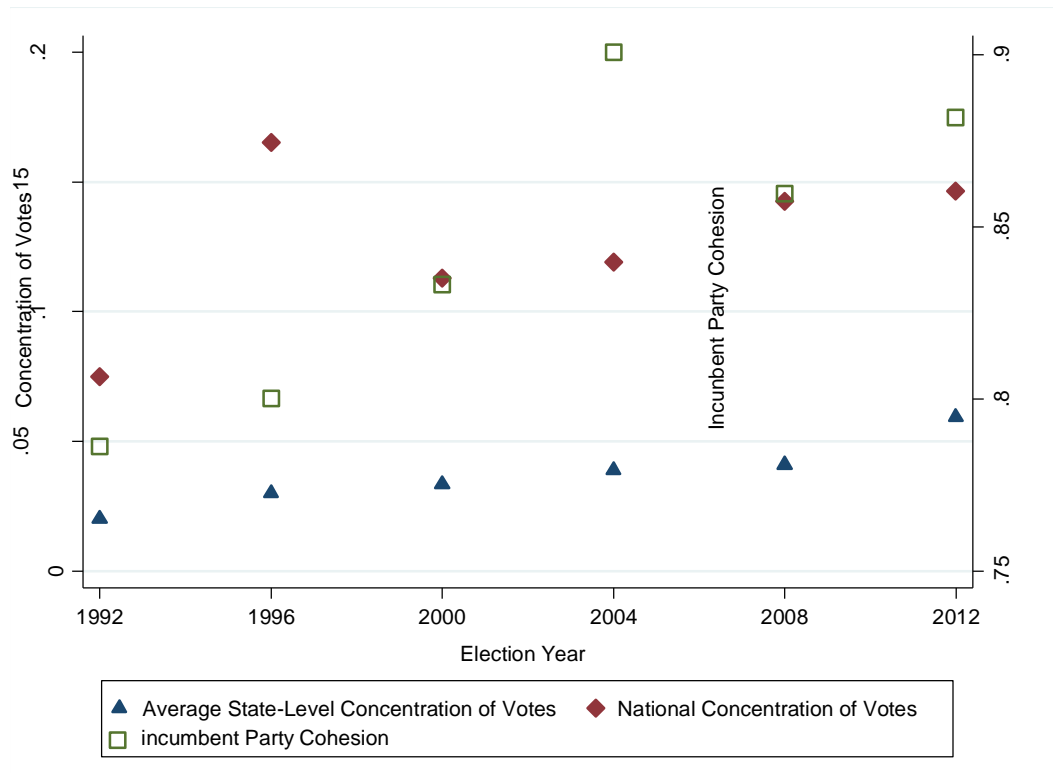


Figure 3.1. Party Cohesion and Concentration of Votes, 1992-2012

To further examine the relationship between party cohesion and the concentration of votes, I conduct a regression analysis. The dependent variable is the concentration of votes for each state, which is calculated with the presidential popular votes that each incumbent party received in congressional districts within each state.⁵¹ I multiply the raw concentration of votes by 100 to make it a percentage. The key independent variable, incumbent party cohesion, is measured at the level of election year, and therefore a multilevel model is adopted as the estimation strategy.⁵²

⁵¹ As mentioned, I exclude some states that have only one congressional district. In this dataset, there are 43 states for each election year and 258 cases in total.

⁵² The data is clustered at election years. Clustering it at states does not lead to any meaningful differences in the results. Conceptually, it makes more sense to see incumbent party cohesion as a second-level factor which is invariant across states in a given election year, rather than seeing it as a first-level characteristic of each state that varies across election years. Accordingly, a fixed-effect model is not appropriate in this case since incumbent party cohesion is not varying within a given election year.

I control for some demographic variables that would affect the concentration of votes. First, *South*, which is a composite of eleven states in the former Confederate States of America, is traditionally seen as a conservative area in the U.S.⁵³ After the 1980s, there have been widely-spread conservative supporters consistently voting for the Republican Party.⁵⁴ Therefore, the votes received by both parties should be less concentrated in these states. Secondly, *Percentage of Rural Population* depicts the level of urbanization of a state, which may capture the density of population and conservative ideology at the same time. In a state with a larger population living in a rural area, the density of population will be lower compared to the density in a highly urbanized city (Rodden 2010). It is expected to see a lower concentration of votes when there is a larger rural population. Accordingly, this variable is expected to have a negative sign. Third, *Percentage of Black People* is another factor that might affect the concentration of votes. It has been noted that black people tend to live together and mostly in urban areas (Stonecash, Brewer and Mariani 2003). In a state where there is a larger population of black people, the votes should be more concentrated. Therefore, I take percentages of black people for each state from the census survey closest to a given election year and expect to see a positive coefficient for this variable. Further, *Percentage of Hispanic people* is coded in the same way with a similar consideration. Because Hispanic people are more likely to live together, in a state where there is a larger population of Hispanic people, the votes received by an incumbent party should be relatively more concentrated. Finally, I include *Immigrants*, which is the four-year

⁵³ The eleven states of the south include Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Texas, Virginia, Tennessee, Louisiana, and Mississippi.

⁵⁴ Since the late 1970s, the conservative southerners have stopped supporting the Democratic Party and have begun Republican identifiers. Moderate and conservative Democrats in Congress were replaced by conservative Republicans (McCarty, Poole and Rosenthal 2006).

average number of people that have been naturalized in a given state.⁵⁵ Although this is not the best measurement of immigration, it captures the proliferation of immigrants in a given state. A large number of immigrants in a state would increase the concentration of votes since immigrants tend to live around the people of their own nationality or ethnicity.

In addition to the demographic variables, I also control for political factors. First, *In-Party Governor* is included. Since the in-party governor may utilize the resources from the state and help the campaign of his or her party to expand the base of support, the incumbent party would receive more widespread votes in states with a in-party governor than it would in other states. As such, the concentration of votes in the states with an in-party governor can be lower than it is otherwise. Second, an incumbent party's *House Seat Share* is the total seat share the incumbent party has in the House of Representatives during the congressional term prior to a given presidential election. A larger House seat share may indicate a greater diversity within a party and a broader range of interests that a party may have to target. Hence, a greater share of House seat may then reduce the possibility of an incumbent party carrying out platforms that target particularistic subsets of voters. Accordingly, I expect this variable to have a negative coefficient. *Share of House Seats by State* is the incumbent party's share of the House representatives elected from a given state during the term prior to the presidential election year. For example, in the congressional term prior to 1992, two out of the 7 representatives elected from Alabama were from the incumbent party (i.e. the Republican Party), the *Share of House Seats* for the incumbent party in 1992 is coded as 28. 57 %. This variable captures the numbers of congressional districts in which an incumbent party was advantageous over the opposition party in the most recent House election. When an incumbent party has won in more congressional districts in a given state in the previous congressional election, it may also have presidential votes that are more

⁵⁵ The unit of this variable is one thousand people.

widespread within that state. *Democrat* is coded as 1 if the incumbent party is the Democratic Party and is coded as 0, otherwise. This variable is included to control for the partisan difference between the two parties. It has been noted that the Democratic Party has support that is more concentrated than the Republican Party (Gimpel and Schuknecht 2002; Rodden 2010). Therefore this variable is expected to have a positive coefficient. The last variable I control for is *Redistricting*. It has been argued that redistricting involves gerrymandering or creating majority-minority districts.⁵⁶ Thus, redistricting may lead to more districts with partisan homogeneity (Carson et.al. 2007; Theriault 2008). If so, redistricting may increase the concentration of votes. I then include a dummy variable denoting the states that have experienced changes in congressional districts after the census surveys in 1990, 2000 and 2010.⁵⁷ In this dataset, states affected by redistricting in the 1992, 2004 and 2012 presidential elections are coded as 1, and those that did not experience redistricting are coded as 0.

Table 3.1 presents the result of the regression analysis. *Incumbent party cohesion* has a positive coefficient across all models, which supports the hypothesis that a higher level of incumbent party cohesion may boost the concentration of votes for the incumbent party.⁵⁸ The finding shows that a cohesive incumbent party does not necessarily carry out national policies that target a broad range of the electorate. Rather, an incumbent party with a higher level of cohesion targets more narrowly.

⁵⁶ Gerrymandering refers to draw the boundaries of districts in favor of certain parties or politicians. It is named so because a governor of Massachusetts, Elbridge Gerry, made a classic case of Gerrymandering in 1812 (Niemi and Abramowitz 1994); Majority-minority districts are districts with a minority population that is large enough to elect a representative (Barreto, Segura and Woods 2004, 65).

⁵⁷ According to the U.S. Constitution (Article 1, Section 2), redistricting is required for the states with changes in population after the census surveys in every ten years.

⁵⁸ There is no meaningful difference between a random effect model and a pooled model. They only slightly differ in standard errors.

Table 3.1. Party Cohesion and Concentration of Votes

	Model I	Model II	Model III
	β (S.E.)	β (S.E.)	β (S.E.)
Incumbent Party Cohesion	.219 (.038)***	.195 (.040)***	.181 (.043)***
South	-.953 (.442)*	-.960 (.438)*	-1.152 (.479)*
Percentage of Rural Population	-.033 (.011)**	-.029 (.011)*	-.040 (.012)**
Percentage of Blacks	.230 (.020)***	.227 (.020)***	.248 (.022)***
Percentage of Hispanics	-.004 (.017)	-.003 (.017)	.046 (.017)**
Immigrants	.035 (.005)***	.034 (.005)***	
In-Party Governor	-.367 (.246)	-.346 (.157)	-.151 (.266)
House Seat Share	-.049 (.036)	-.022 (.038)	-.006 (.041)
Share of State-Owned House Seats	-.002 (.005)	-.003 (.005)	-.003 (.005)
Democrat	.590 (.246)*	.654 (.245)**	.715 (.268)**
Redistricting		.701 (.312)*	.810 (.341)*
Constant	-14.527 (2.509)***	-13.996 (2.501)***	-13.557 (2.739)***
Number of Cases	258	258	258
Number of Groups	6	6	6

Note: σ: p<.1; *: p<.05; **:p<.01; ***:p<.001

Some of the control variables have significant and expected effects on the concentration of votes, while the other variables do not have coefficients that are significant at the conventional level ($p > .05$). In the South, in the states with a larger rural population and in the states with an in-party governor, incumbent parties have a lower concentration of votes. On the other hand, incumbent parties have a higher concentration of votes in the states with a larger black population and the states with a large increase in immigrants during a presidential term. Since *Immigrants* may contain a large portion of Hispanic people, I exclude *Immigrants*, and *Percentage of Hispanic People* become significant in the third model. Accordingly, the Hispanic

population may still contribute to the concentration of votes. Further, as expected, the Democratic Party has a higher concentration of votes than the Republicans. Finally, redistricting leads to a higher concentration of votes. This finding indicates that redistricting indeed create more districts with partisan homogeneity.

In sum, while most of the literature about particularistic politics sees party cohesion as a shield that prevents particularistic politics and as a tool that can be used to produce broadly targeting policies, the evidence here suggests the opposite. When party cohesion increases, the concentration of votes also increases. This finding supports my theory that high levels of party cohesion may enable a party to target a narrower range of the electorate in return for disproportionately larger support from the targeted sets of voters.

Concentration of Votes and Electoral Success

The previous section has shown that a higher level of party cohesion leads to a high concentration of votes, this section is taking a step further to test how the concentration of votes influences the electoral fortune of an incumbent party.

Assuming that incumbent parties are reelection seekers whose best interest is to stay in office, serving particular subsets of voters, rather than earning widely-spread support from the general citizens, may help incumbent parties resume their power.⁵⁹ Although incumbent parties may try their best to serve the public interests, it is difficult, if not impossible, to do so without losing votes. In particular, a policy that may displease a party's supporters may not successfully draw the support for the party from the other voters. Even if it does attract the support from swing voters or voters who identify with the opposition party, such support might not be reliable. Negative occurrences or shocks to valence (e.g. scandals, economic shocks, severe accidents or crises and so on) may push these swing voters or opposition identifiers away. Accordingly, rational reelection seekers would prioritize securing a base of support.

Furthermore, serving the public interest is not efficient for an incumbent party to secure the electoral success. The public interest is hard to define, and the reward for serving the public interest is not guaranteed. To serve the public interest requires efforts to study policies as well as negotiations with the people affected. Such efforts will not be rewarded by the public if the policies turn out to be ineffective in solving the problems (e.g. economic depression). Even worse, the opposition party would oppose and deny the merits of the incumbent's policies, even if the policies are in the best interest of the public. Therefore, it is highly likely that the attempts

⁵⁹ Parties may have three goals to pursue: policy, office and votes (Müller and Strøm 1999). I assume that the three goals could be pursued simultaneously as a party may carry out preferred policies to serve particular sets of voters in return of votes that are sufficient to obtain the office(s).

and efforts to serve the public will not be appreciated in the end. In comparison, to identify the interests of particular voters is easier, and the benefit-vote exchanges between the incumbent party and these particular voters can be done with a greater certainty (Gimpel and Schuknecht 2002; Lynn 2008).

For the reasons above, securing a base of support by targeting particular subsets of voters should be in a higher priority for an incumbent party who desires to survive in elections. In return, disproportionately larger shares of votes from the benefited voters may help compensate for the loss of votes from failures in serving the public interests. In short, a high concentration of votes is beneficial to the electoral fortunes of an incumbent party. An incumbent party that manages to receive votes that are concentrated would be more able to resist being held accountable to the public interest.

To test the hypothesis that the concentration of votes improves the electoral fortune of an incumbent party, I regress state-level vote shares of the incumbent parties in presidential elections (in percentage) on the state-level concentration of votes used in the previous section.⁶⁰ Although winning the presidency in the U.S. is not absolutely determined by the shares of popular votes, the shares of popular votes are critical to win the electoral votes from states. Thus, vote shares in each state may to a large extent indicate an incumbent party's success in a presidential election. As for estimation, I adopt a random-effect model with data clustered at election years.⁶¹

The control variables are slightly different from the previous analysis. I code the demographic variables with a partisan consideration. Some variables such as *Percentage of Black*

⁶⁰ Due to the small number of cases, I am not able to conduct a national-level analysis. Since electoral success in the states determines the outcomes of presidential elections to a substantial extent, the analysis may also reveal how concentration of votes affects the electoral fortunes of incumbent parties at the national level.

⁶¹ Clustering at states does not lead to any meaningful differences in the results.

People, Percentage of Hispanic People, Immigrants, Percentage of Rural Population, and the *South* would have different effects on different parties' vote shares. Coding these variables without a partisan consideration would lead to a misleading conclusion about their effects. For example, a larger black population would help the Democratic Party, while making the Republican Party inferior. Therefore, its effect should be positive when the incumbent party is the Democratic Party and negative when the Republican Party is the incumbent. Accordingly, these five variables are multiplied by -1 when the incumbent party is the Republican Party. As a result, *Percentage of Black People, Percentage of Hispanic People, Immigrants* are expected to have positive coefficients, meaning that these variables have positive effects on the Democratic Party's vote shares and negative effects on the Republican Party's. On the contrary, *Percentage of Rural Population* and the *South* are expected to have negative coefficients, meaning that the two variables have negative effects for the Democratic Party and positive effects for the Republican Party.

In addition to the demographic variables, I also include *Log Median Income* and the *Unemployment Rate* for each state to control for the impact of the economy on the incumbent parties' electoral fortunes.⁶² As for political factors, I include the incumbent parties' *Shares of House Seats by States* and *Senate Seats* from each state, along with the *In-Party Governor* from the previous section. *Share of House Seats by States* the incumbent party's share of the House representatives elected from a given state during the term prior to the presidential election year. This variable has been included in the model of the concentration of votes. It captures both the electoral strength of an incumbent party in a given state and the ability of the party to deliver "pork" to the state that might affect the electoral performance of the incumbent party. By the same token, *Senate Seats* could be another important factor. Given that a party may at most have

⁶² Please see the appendix for the details of the variables.

two seats from each state, for the sake of simplicity, this variable is coded as 1 if a given incumbent party has at least one senator from a given state, and 0 if the incumbent party does not have a senator from that state. The above two variables are expected to have a positive impact on the incumbent party's vote share. Another political factor, *In-Party Governor*, is to control for the impact of a sitting governor from an incumbent party on the incumbent party's electoral performance in a given state. Finally, in one of the models, I include the incumbent party's *Previous Vote Shares* in each state to control for the support that a given incumbent party has received in the previous election.

Table 3.2 shows the result of regression analysis. The concentration of votes has a positive impact on state-level electoral success of the incumbent party, indicating that the concentration of votes improves the incumbent party's electoral fortune. As such, a higher concentration of votes makes it harder for the public as a whole to hold an incumbent party accountable.

Table 3.2. Concentration of Votes and Vote Shares

	Model I	Model II
	β (S.E.)	β (S.E.)
Concentration of Votes	.447 (.131)**	.459 (.120)***
South	-6.498 (1.323)***	-4.622 (1.237)***
Percentage of Rural Population	-.032 (.020)	.006 (.020)
Percentage of Blacks	.171 (.057)**	.129 (.052)*
Percentage of Hispanics	.089 (.041)*	.104 (.038)**
Immigrants	.019 (.016)	.008 (.015)
Log Median Income	-1.477 (2.599)	-.702 (2.376)
Unemployment Rate	-.634 (.250)*	-.986 (.234)***
In-Party Governor	.296 (.823)	.015 (.752)
(State-Own) Senate Seat	3.100 (.939)**	1.662 (.881) σ
Share of (State-Own) House Seats	.176 (.016)***	.117 (.017)***
Previous Vote Shares		.436 (.062)***
Constant	54.927 (28.647) σ	30.606 (26.382)
Number of Cases	258	258
Number of Groups	6	6

Note: σ : $p < .1$; *: $p < .05$; **: $p < .01$; ***: $p < .001$

South has a significant and negative coefficient. Because this variable is coded as 1 if the Democratic Party is the incumbent and -1 if the Republican Party is the incumbent, the negative coefficient means that the Democratic Party as an incumbent gains smaller vote shares in the eleven states of the South than in other states, while the Republican Party as an incumbent gains larger vote shares in the South than in other states. *Percentage of Black People* and *Percentage of Hispanic People* both have a positive and significant coefficient. Due to the way of coding, the

positive coefficients mean that the Democratic Party as an incumbent receives larger vote shares and the Republican Party receive fewer votes in the states where there is a larger black or Hispanic population. *Unemployment Rates* has a significant and negative coefficient, indicating that an incumbent party, on average, has a smaller vote share in the states with a larger proportion of people unemployed. *Senate Seat* has a significant and positive coefficient, suggesting that an incumbent party with at least a senator from a given state can have better electoral performance in that state. However, after controlling for previous vote shares, the coefficient is only significant at the .1 level. Finally, the coefficient for *Share of House Seats by State* indicates that an incumbent party with more House representatives from a given state can perform better in the election in that state.

Other variables, such as *Percentage of Rural Population*, *Immigrants*, *Log Median Income* and *In-Party Governor*, fail to reach the conventional level of significance ($p < .05$). A possible explanation for insignificance would be that they are correlated with one or more variables in the model. Whereas it is not appropriate to drop any of these variables of theoretical importance, I decided to include all the variables and leave this issue for future investigations.

In this section, I have shown that the greater the ability of an incumbent party to win strong support from subsets of voters, the higher the chance for the party to survive the reelection, regardless of performance in serving public interests. Hence, if a higher level of party cohesion enhances such ability, a cohesive incumbent party will receive votes that are more concentrated and therefore will have a better chance of winning elections. Consequently, the incumbent party can count the electoral success on particular subsets of voters and keep the public in general from holding the incumbent party accountable for serving public interests.

Discussion

Several theoretical implications can be drawn from the findings. To begin with, the findings do not support the conventional belief in the impact of party cohesion on accountability. The APISA's report and its following studies considered that high levels of party cohesion are required to have programmatic politics in which the public as a whole may hold the incumbent party accountable for providing collective or public goods. The rationale is that particularistic exchanges can be constrained by high levels of party cohesion and the politics may focus on programmatic party platforms that serve a broad range of citizens. If this was true, it would be found that a higher level of party cohesion is associated with a higher concentration of votes. However, the findings in this paper suggest the opposite. The conventional view was not sufficient to account for the empirical politics in two aspects. For one, while a high level of party cohesion provides the means for a party to carry out policies that serve national-wide interests, a cohesive party may not have incentive to serve the public. For another, policy benefits are not necessarily distributed evenly across the country, and policies can also be produced to geographically target particular subsets of voters. A high level of party cohesion may instead enable an incumbent party to carry out policies in order to serve particular subsets of voters. As a result, the incumbent party may win elections with support from these targeted voters and resist being held accountable to the public.

To elaborate, it has been argued that parties do not maximize votes, while they only pursue votes in a sufficient amount to get into office (Riker 1962; Müller and Strøm 1999). If so, a party may not have incentive to serve as broadly as possible in order to maximize its votes. Also, it is difficult for a party to serve various interests simultaneously, and the return in terms of votes from the public, in general, is not certain. Therefore, parties may have incentive to rely on exchanges with particular subsets of voters to secure their base of support, given that the interests

of particular sets of voters are easily identified and the returns from the particularistic exchanges can be expected with a higher certainty. While a variety of particularistic exchanges in democracies have been observed, and scholars have believed that higher levels of party cohesion may constrain such exchanges, the findings in this research suggest that high levels of party cohesion may facilitate a “policy-based particularistic exchange” between incumbent parties and voters, hindering voters from holding incumbent parties accountable for public interests.

Secondly, political scientists have discussed the distinctions between policy-based and particularistic politics or the differences between functional and territorial issues (Caramani 2004). However, these categorizations might not be meaningful, since in reality there is no clear-cut distinction between each category. Almost no single policy can serve the interest of every subset of people or every area of a nation. Different sets of people respond to the same policy differently. When a policy is carried out, some gain and others lose. To some degree, all policies have a target, and policy-based politics also involves with particularistic exchanges between parties and voters. By a similar notion, functional issues are not absolutely distinct from territorial issues because functional issues can be responded to differently across geographical boundaries. As mentioned, trade and industrial policies may bring benefits to some local constituencies while they may impose costs to others (McGillivray 2004). For another example, urban and rural areas may respond differently to environmental and agricultural issues. Likewise, in regards to energy issues, people living around nuclear power plants would not be in agreement with those who live far away. Therefore, functional issues can also be territorial, which is why even in a developed democracy, such as the U.S., regionalism still matters in politics (Gimpel and Schuknecht 2002). Further, even if parties with high levels of cohesion will compete over functional issues in a nation-wide constituency, their votes may not be distributed evenly across the nation. Instead, the geographical concentration of votes in the United States has increased as

the partisan rivalries between two parties have escalated. If parties that become cohesive are more able to serve particular local interests, the nationalization of American parties, which have been discussed by scholars (Caramani 2004; Brady, D'Onofrio and Fiorina 2000), might simply be localization in disguise.

Returning to the main topic of this paper, to put the impact of party cohesion into perspective, high levels of party cohesion may grant parties with more leverage to serve particular subsets of voters in pursuit of electoral success. When incumbent parties can rely on particular subsets of voters and win elections without broadly-spread support from the whole public, they will not be held accountable for serving public interests. Consequently, the lack of accountability to the public interest may appear as a problem in American democracy.

Conclusion

High levels of party cohesion were desired because political scientists believed that when party cohesion is at a high level, programmatic and policy-based politics can be expected, and particularistic exchanges can be constrained. From this perspective, the ruling elites will be held accountable collectively for serving the best interest of the public when there is a high level of party cohesion. However, this research has demonstrated three points that shatter the above view.

First, the evidence from the United States shows that the concentration of votes increased with party cohesion. This would not be observed if high levels of party cohesion really made the incumbent parties act in the best interest of the whole public, bringing out policies that target nation-wide constituencies. Second, a higher concentration of votes is associated with a larger vote share, indicating that the increasing concentration of votes benefits incumbent parties in elections. This finding not only suggests that incumbent parties may have incentive to make their votes more concentrated, but also reveals that incumbent parties can further their chances of winning elections by boosting votes from particular subsets of voters. Third, combining the first and second piece of evidence, a high level of party cohesion may give an incumbent party leeway to win elections without general, nation-wide support, which implies that accountability is diminishing as party cohesion is increasing.

Due to the limited availability of data, this paper only investigates the state-level concentration of votes through the presidential votes at the level of congressional districts between 1992 and 2012. Future research may further gather the data that is disaggregated at the county level for more election years. Also, it would be interesting if one were to study the relationship between party cohesion and the concentration of votes in other democracies.

Maybe, not all politics is local, and maybe, national issues matter more than local

concerns.⁶³ However, neither of these two statements is relevant if the opinions toward national issues are not distributed evenly across all localities, and if voters from different localities cast votes differently for the same national policies. When national policies have implications that vary among localities, what is truly relevant is how incumbent parties utilize higher levels of party cohesion to target people from certain localities and win elections. Therefore, the impacts of party cohesion on the concentration of votes, and on accountability, are worth further studies.

⁶³ “All politics is local” is a well known political saying in American politics. It emphasizes the importance of local factors to American politics. The origin of the phrase has been believed to be Senator Tip O’Neill who used this phrase in his campaign in 1935.

CONCLUSION

This dissertation features party cohesion as a factor that leads to changes in accountability. Political scientists have believed that a high level of party cohesion may improve accountability. However, the evidence provided by this dissertation does not sustain such a belief. Rather, by taking into account the variation of party cohesion across time, the three essays demonstrate that voters are less likely to hold ruling elites accountable for the public interest when party cohesion increases.

The first essay revisits a conventional view that a legislator's party loyalty is costly to his or her electoral fortune. I assume that legislators are rational actors who will not commit political suicide by increasing their loyalty to the party as doing so is electorally costly. Hence, the recent rise of party loyalty indicates that the electoral cost of party loyalty may have been reduced. This reduction of electoral cost, I argue, can be attributed to increases in income inequality. Increases in income inequality may lead voters to care about the success of the party. Hence, voters are less likely to punish legislators who vote loyally with the party in Congress. With data from the U.S. House elections from 1976 to 2008, I have demonstrated that the electoral cost of party loyalty decreases with income inequality. This finding implies that party-oriented accountability and a responsible party system are likely to exist in the era of high income inequality, despite the political institutions that may constrain party loyalty.

The second chapter is an attempt to challenge Powell and Whitten (1993)'s thesis of clarity of responsibility. They proclaimed that party cohesion may improve clarity of responsibility, enhancing economic voting, while I find that a high level of party cohesion may instead hinders voters from holding the incumbent party accountable for economic conditions. My argument is featuring the interaction between two parties, which has long been neglected by the literature.

High levels of incumbent and opposition party cohesion may interactively make the party line clear. The clear party line proliferates partisan cues that may lead voters to downplay their concerns about actual economic conditions when making voting decisions. With data from the American National Election Studies (ANES) between 1980 and 2008, I demonstrate that party cohesion is a double-edged sword that both improves and weakens economic voting. In particular, when both parties have a high level of party cohesion, it is less likely that the incumbent party is held accountable for the economy. This finding not only shatters Powell and Whitten's thesis, but also contributes to the literature of economic voting by analyzing opposition party cohesion and clarity of party line.

The last essay investigates whether a high level of party cohesion may give the incumbent party ability to resist being held accountable to the public. It is to directly test the conventional belief that high levels of party cohesion may make programmatic policies the focus of politics so that the incumbent party can be held accountable for the public interest. Through the investigation of the relationship between party cohesion and the concentration of votes received by the incumbent party, I find that increases in party cohesion may instead lead to a higher concentration of votes. This implies that an incumbent party may serve a narrower range of the electorate when it has a higher level of party cohesion. I further demonstrate that a higher concentration of votes is beneficial to the incumbent party's electoral fortune. A high level of party cohesion enables the incumbent party to target particular sets of the electorate, which gives the party disproportionately large support that covers the loss of votes from the entire public. In sum, a high level of party cohesion may enable an incumbent party to win elections on the basis of exchanges with particular subsets of voters, leading to lack of accountability to the entire public.

With these three studies, this dissertation has made several contributions. First, this

dissertation is one of the few efforts devoted to studying the consequences, rather than the causes, of party cohesion. Since the APSA's report, scholars have devoted efforts to studying why party cohesion is low and how to increase it in the United States. Theories, including conditional party government (Aldrich and Rohde 2000a; Aldrich and Rohde 2001; Rohde 1991), procedural cartel theory (Cox and McCubbins 1993) and strategic party government (Lebo, McGlynn and Koger 2009), have suggested various conditions and factors leading to increases in party cohesion. In the studies of comparative politics, Carey (2009), Carey and Shugart (1995), Cox (1987), Kim (2009) and Shugart and Carey (1992) also provide explanations to the variation of party cohesion. In short, these studies were designed to answer a "how-so" question. However, as party cohesion in the United States has increased to a high level, my dissertation attempts to answer a "so-what" question by investigating the impacts of party cohesion on accountability. The answer provided here suggests that a high level of party cohesion may not improve accountability in the way that many political scientists have wished for.

Second, unlike previous literature, this dissertation takes into account the variation of party cohesion across time in studying the impacts of party cohesion. In this dissertation, the conventional wisdom that increases of party cohesion may improve democratic accountability has been tested with data from the United States. The attempt is to provide empirical evidence showing how changes in party cohesion affect the way in which voters hold ruling elites accountable. The findings in the three essays are contradictory to the conventional wisdom. They demonstrate that when party cohesion is at a high level, voters may hold ruling elites accountable for the sake of partisan goals, but not the interest of the public. This dissertation provides theories and empirical evidence that capture the impacts of party cohesion on accountability in contemporary American politics.

Third, the impacts of party cohesion found in this dissertation have implications on studies of

political institutions. The United States does not have the political institutions that create party-oriented politics in which the role of party is emphasized and parties have high levels of cohesion. The presidential system and Single Member District system (SMD) with primary elections have been regarded as reasons why party-oriented politics and a responsible party government are not likely to exist in the U.S. However, the recent rise of party cohesion shatters this view. Regardless of these institutions, party cohesion in the United States has still increased, and the evidence here suggests that income inequality is one of the driving forces behind this development. Another implication on studies of political institutions is that the effects of political systems should take the interaction between political actors into consideration. For example, Powell and Whitten (1993) treat party cohesion as a stable feature that can improve clarity of responsibility and economic accountability. When the interaction between two cohesive parties is considered, party cohesion affects economic accountability not only through clarity of responsibility, but also clarity of party line. Contrary to clarity of responsibility, clarity of party line may hinder voters from holding the incumbent party accountable for the economy. Another example is that party cohesion may not improve accountability since parties with a high level of cohesion may not use it to target the electorate as broadly as possible. When an incumbent party has incentive to target particular sets of the electorate, institutions that may induce high levels of party cohesion may instead help the incumbent party to resist being held accountable for the public interest.

Fourth, while the literature shows that income inequality may lead to lower political participation (Gaventa 1980; Pateman 1971; Schattschneider 1960; Solt 2008; Solt 2010), political polarization (Bartels 2004, 2008; Gelman 2008; Garand 2010; McCarty, Poole, and Rosenthal 2006), democratization (Acemoglu and Robinson 2006; Boix 2003) and violence (Nepal, Bohara and Gawande 2011; Weede 1981), my research demonstrates that income inequality has an

impact on accountability. That is, increases in income inequality may lead voters to care about the success of the party. Hence, loyal representatives who can assist the party to achieve success are more likely to be rewarded than to be punished when there is a higher level of income inequality. Such an effect may lead to party-oriented politics and a responsible party government, which has been desired for years by political scientists.

This dissertation contributes several new paths for future research. First, due to the availability of data for party cohesion, this dissertation focuses only on the United States. Although it is easy to hold country-specific factors (e.g. political institutions) constant in a single-country study, a comparative study may help further understand the impacts of party cohesion on accountability across different political systems and the interaction between party cohesion and political institutions. The evidence shows that some countries that have had low levels of party cohesion, such as the United States, Brazil and Taiwan, have increasing party cohesion while others that had a high level of party cohesion, such as the United Kingdom, have sometimes experienced low levels of party cohesion (Canton and Herrnson 1997, 395; Kam 2009; Ladewig 2010; Lyne 2008; McCarty, Poole and Rosenthal 2006; Sinclair 2006; Sheng 2008). Comparative studies on the impacts of party cohesion across these political systems will provide a more thorough view on this topic.

Second, this dissertation is solely based upon party cohesion in the House of Representative, while an investigation of the party cohesion in the Senate might provide additional findings for the impacts of party cohesion. Since party polarization and increases in party cohesion also occurred in the Senate (Garand 2010; Theriault 2008), studies on how senators are held accountable may be crucial in understanding the effects of party cohesion on accountability.

Third, this dissertation only focuses on election-wise dependent variables, while accountability can also be studied by investigating attitudes toward the government or

democratic politics. This dissertation finds that income inequality is an important factor that makes party-oriented politics possible in the United States. Numerous studies also relate income inequality to party polarization (Garand 2010; McCarty, Poole and Rothenthal 2006). A straightforward extension for future research is to study how income inequality may affect individual voters' attitudes toward legislators' party loyalty. It has been shown that individual voters indeed respond to roll call votes in Congress (Ansolabehere and Jones 2010). Moreover, an individual voter with strong partisanship has lower confidence in a bi-partisan Congress where legislators behave as if no party line is separating them (Harbridge and Malhotra 2011). Combining these studies, my research suggests that income inequality may lead voters to have a positive attitude toward legislator's party loyalty. Another potential topic for research is that income inequality may enlarge the winner-loser gap in political attitudes. Winner-loser gap is a phenomenon that has been a recent focus of political science research. It means that voters who have supported candidates or parties that won the previous election have more supportive attitudes toward the government or democratic practice than those who have supported the losers in the election (Anderson et. al. 2005). Given that income inequality may enlarge issue cleavages, voters who supported the loser in the election would suffer a greater loss when income inequality increases. Accordingly, the winner-loser gap would be larger in countries with higher income inequality.

Fourth, this dissertation investigates electoral outcomes, while studies of specific policies may further discover the effects of party cohesion. For example, although it is questionable whether voters look into legislators' voting record on specific issues, it would be worth investigating how party cohesion on economic policies affects economic voting. Another extension for research is to study the impacts of party cohesion on the distribution of policy benefits. Franzese, Jusko and Nooruddin (2007) examine how party cohesion is related to the

amount of locally-targeting spending. However, as this dissertation suggests, policy benefits can be distributed to narrower sets of the electorate while it decreases in amount. Accordingly, it is the distribution, rather than the amount, of policy benefits that shows the impacts of party cohesion on particularistic exchanges between ruling elites and voters. A study examining the impacts of party cohesion on the distribution of policy benefits would further clarify the relationship between party cohesion and accountability.

To conclude, this dissertation has made contributions to understanding the impacts of party cohesion on accountability. Political scientists have once believed that a high level of party cohesion may lead to a party-oriented politics where democratic accountability can be improved. However, the evidence from the United States indicates that the way voters hold ruling elites accountable have become partisan, and the accountability for the interest of the public have diminished in party-oriented politics. As party cohesion has increased and partisan rivalry has been getting severe, the trade-off between party-oriented accountability and the ideal accountability is a new angle to explore and examine democratic politics. Given the benefits and costs of party cohesion, it is time to reconsider whether a democracy needs to maximize the level of party cohesion. Maybe, the most important and challenging task for political scientists is to figure out an optimal level of party cohesion that might really bring us what we have wished for—a democracy where citizens hold ruling elites accountable for their performance in serving the best interest of the public.

APPENDIX

Table A.1. Summary Statistics for Chapter One

	Mean	Standard Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
Vote Share	68.36	14.29	2.35	100
Party Cohesion	84.82	14.73	3.96	100
Gini Index	40.65	2.86	35.8	44.4
Decile Ratio	6.76	1.10	4.13	12.59
Ideology	.37	.18	0	1.239
Fresh	.17		0	1
Party Leader	.02		0	1
Challenger's Quality	.17		0	1
Polarization	.72	.17	.49	.99
Aggregate Party Loyalty	84.82	6.33	73.42	95.49
Log GDP	10.04	.50	9.02	10.76
Unemployment rate	6.18	1.37	3.97	9.71
Midterm	1978, 1982, 1986, 1990, 1994, 1998, 2002, 2006			

Table A.2. Summary Statistics for Chapter Two

	Mean	Standard Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
Vote For Incumbent Party	.40		0	1
Economic Perception (Worse=1)	.33		0	1
Incumbent Cohesion	79.91	5.01	72.5	90.07
Opposition Cohesion	82.92	5.12	75.87	90.54
Incumbent Cohesion × Opposition Cohesion	6647.27	790.27	5582.05	7783.09
Approve of President's Job (Approve=1)	.49		0	1
Partisanship (incumbent party=1)	.29		0	1
Ideology (same with incumbent party=1)	.74	.17	.52	.99
Race	.56		0	1
On-Going War	1984, 1992, 2004			
Reelection	1984, 1988, 1992, 1996, 2000, 2008			
Divided Government	1980, 1984, 1992, 1996, 2004			

Note: The mean values for dummy variables at the micro-level are the percentage of the respondents who are coded as 1. For the variables at the election level, I simply list the election years in which the variables are coded as 1.

Calculation of Concentration of Votes in Chapter Three

Batto (2005) calculates *Concentration Index* as following:

$$\text{Concentration Index} = \left[\sum \frac{(E_i - C_i)^2}{E_i} \right] / \left[\frac{\left(\frac{C_d}{V_d} C_d - C_d \right)^2}{\frac{C_d}{V_d} C_d} + \frac{\left(\frac{C_d}{V_d} (V_d - C_d) - 0 \right)^2}{\frac{C_d}{V_d} (V_d - C_d)} \right],$$

Where E_i is the expected number of votes that a candidate receives in a precinct, i , and C_i is the actual number of votes received by that candidate. E_i is calculated as the number of total votes in precinct i times the district-wide vote share of the candidate (C_d / V_d).

The numerator is equivalent to the formula to calculate chi-square. When a candidate receives votes from some precincts that are different than what he is expected to receive, the votes are not distributed evenly within the district. The denominator is the theoretical range of the numerator. The theoretical maximum of the numerator occurs when a candidate obtains all his district-wide votes solely from a precinct, while the minimum is 0 as all the observed votes are equal to the expected votes.⁶⁴ Accordingly, the value of concentration index ranges from 0 to 1.

To calculate national concentration of votes for a given party, C_d is the national-wide votes received by that party, and V_d is the total votes cast in the whole country. Since the lower level

⁶⁴ In Batto's explanation, "This value is at a minimum when the candidate gets exactly the same vote share in all precincts. If $C^i = E^i$ for all i , then this formula will yield a value of 0. The value reaches a maximum when, for a given district-wide vote total, C^d , the district can be divided into two sets of precincts. One set has a sum of exactly C^d valid votes, and the candidate gets all C^d of those votes. The other set has a sum of $V^d - C^d$ valid votes, and the candidate gets none of those votes. Mathematically, the number or size of the precincts in each of the sets is unimportant, and it is convenient to represent the district as having only two precincts, one of size C^d and one of size $V^d - C^d$ " (Batto 2005, 58-9).

unit here is each congressional district, E_i is the expected number of votes that a party receives in a congressional district i , and C_i is the actual number of district votes received by that party.

For the case of state-level concentration, C_d is the state-wide votes received by a party in a given state and V_d is the total votes cast in that state. E_i is the expected number of votes that a party receives in a congressional district i of that given state, and C_i is the actual number of district votes received by that party.

Regarding the sources of data, the presidential votes in congressional districts comes from three sources. For the elections from 1992 to 2004, I take the data from the website of Polidata; for the election in 2008, the data is drawn from the Swing State Project; and for the election in 2012 is from the website of Daily Kos.

Table A.3. State-level Concentration of votes, 1992-2012

State	1992		1996		2000	
	Incumbent	Opposition	Incumbent	Opposition	Incumbent	Opposition
Alabama	0.047	0.060	0.067	0.059	0.065	0.060
Arizona	0.006	0.111	0.014	0.012	0.012	0.013
Arkansas	0.009	0.017	0.017	0.013	0.013	0.011
California	0.034	0.066	0.061	0.060	0.073	0.079
Colorado	0.023	0.030	0.028	0.030	0.032	0.038
Connecticut	0.010	0.008	0.006	0.008	0.007	0.008
Florida	0.031	0.045	0.049	0.042	0.057	0.056
Georgia	0.038	0.060	0.056	0.044	0.075	0.072
Hawaii	0.002	0.000	0.000	0.002	0.000	0.001
Idaho	0.001	0.001	0.001	0.000	0.000	0.000
Illinois	0.050	0.093	0.087	0.067	0.094	0.093
Indiana	0.019	0.030	0.030	0.029	0.036	0.035
Iowa	0.004	0.003	0.004	0.004	0.006	0.006
Kansas	0.002	0.006	0.012	0.011	0.012	0.012
Kentucky	0.003	0.007	0.007	0.004	0.011	0.011
Louisiana	0.054	0.078	0.048	0.040	0.061	0.059
Maine	0.001	0.000	0.000	0.001	0.001	0.001
Maryland	0.049	0.091	0.088	0.067	0.100	0.099
Massachusetts	0.005	0.016	0.010	0.007	0.008	0.010
Michigan	0.032	0.064	0.056	0.045	0.060	0.057
Minnesota	0.010	0.021	0.015	0.012	0.020	0.026
Mississippi	0.021	0.033	0.036	0.028	0.038	0.038
Missouri	0.013	0.012	0.040	0.030	0.056	0.055
Nebraska	0.003	0.009	0.009	0.006	0.015	0.017
Nevada	0.006	0.012	0.013	0.009	0.016	0.015
New Hampshire	0.001	0.001	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
New Jersey	0.020	0.030	0.037	0.031	0.040	0.037
New Mexico	0.003	0.007	0.003	0.003	0.005	0.007
New York	0.042	0.094	0.084	0.059	0.089	0.087
North Carolina	0.026	0.040	0.043	0.036	0.023	0.023
Ohio	0.027	0.036	0.045	0.042	0.043	0.044
Oklahoma	0.018	0.018	0.019	0.020	0.010	0.010
Oregon	0.007	0.014	0.016	0.016	0.030	0.033
Pennsylvania	0.036	0.059	0.061	0.048	0.071	0.068
Rhode Island	0.001	0.002	0.001	0.000	0.001	0.001
South Carolina	0.025	0.043	0.039	0.031	0.033	0.030
Tennessee	0.017	0.027	0.034	0.026	0.042	0.041
Texas	0.036	0.064	0.064	0.058	0.071	0.073
Utah	0.009	0.010	0.014	0.012	0.015	0.023
Virginia	0.021	0.035	0.033	0.028	0.027	0.027
Washington	0.017	0.031	0.024	0.022	0.039	0.047

Table A.3.(cont'd)

	2004	2008	2012			
State	Incumbent	Opposition	Incumbent	Opposition	Incumbent	Opposition
West Virginia	0.004	0.008	0.007	0.005	0.005	0.004
Wisconsin	0.012	0.024	0.017	0.017	0.028	0.031
Mean	0.018	0.033	0.030	0.025	0.033	0.034
Alabama	0.066	0.067	0.089	0.156	0.099	0.096
Arizona	0.021	0.021	0.023	0.023	0.049	0.049
Arkansas	0.009	0.009	0.005	0.006	0.007	0.006
California	0.094	0.092	0.079	0.078	0.080	0.084
Colorado	0.049	0.049	0.048	0.047	0.041	0.041
Connecticut	0.005	0.005	0.005	0.005	0.007	0.012
Florida	0.056	0.058	0.079	0.082	0.067	0.065
Georgia	0.125	0.125	0.118	0.120	0.134	0.131
Hawaii	0.001	0.001	0.001	0.001	0.000	0.001
Idaho	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Illinois	0.093	0.093	0.081	0.084	0.095	0.093
Indiana	0.040	0.041	0.034	0.035	0.037	0.036
Iowa	0.011	0.011	0.012	0.012	0.008	0.008
Kansas	0.018	0.019	0.022	0.023	0.017	0.017
Kentucky	0.013	0.014	0.023	0.025	0.043	0.042
Louisiana	0.070	0.071	0.060	0.063	0.109	0.105
Maine	0.001	0.001	0.003	0.004	0.004	0.004
Maryland	0.093	0.094	0.102	0.105	0.060	0.059
Massachusetts	0.016	0.015	0.023	0.024	0.024	0.025
Michigan	0.058	0.060	0.048	0.050	0.068	0.067
Minnesota	0.035	0.034	0.034	0.034	0.038	0.040
Mississippi	0.047	0.047	0.065	0.067	0.075	0.072
Missouri	0.069	0.071	0.075	0.077	0.101	0.097
Nebraska	0.018	0.018	0.028	0.029	0.024	0.022
Nevada	0.014	0.015	0.013	0.013	0.021	0.021
New Hampshire	0.001	0.001	0.001	0.001	0.002	0.002
New Jersey	0.042	0.043	0.048	0.049	0.068	0.067
New Mexico	0.010	0.010	0.011	0.012	0.011	0.013
New York	0.084	0.086	0.094	0.097	0.104	0.102
North Carolina	0.042	0.042	0.046	0.048	0.077	0.076
Ohio	0.048	0.048	0.043	0.045	0.060	0.058
Oklahoma	0.007	0.007	0.008	0.008	0.010	0.010
Oregon	0.033	0.036	0.035	0.035	0.044	0.046
Pennsylvania	0.087	0.092	0.075	0.077	0.103	0.090
Rhode Island	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.004	0.004
South Carolina	0.031	0.033	0.032	0.033	0.052	0.050
Tennessee	0.048	0.049	0.074	0.077	0.102	0.099
Texas	0.072	0.072	0.083	0.084	0.106	0.104
Utah	0.010	0.011	0.007	0.008	0.013	0.013

Table A.3.(cont'd)

Virginia	0.035	0.036	0.040	0.041	0.061	0.060
Washington	0.054	0.054	0.052	0.053	0.054	0.055
West Virginia	0.001	0.002	0.000	0.000	0.002	0.002
Wisconsin	0.040	0.040	0.042	0.041	0.056	0.056
Mean	0.039	0.039	0.041	0.044	0.050	0.049

Table A.4. Control Variables in Chapter Three

Variables	Description		Source
	Model of Concentration	Model of Vote Shares	
South	1: The eleven Confederate states. 0: otherwise.	1: The eleven Confederate States and the incumbent party (a.k.a the president's party) is the Democratic Party. -1: The eleven Confederate States and the incumbent party (a.k.a the president's party) is the Republican Party. 0: The other 32 states	Collected by Author

Percentage of Rural Population	The percentage of people living in rural areas.	The percentage of people living in rural areas in a given state, if the incumbent party is the Democratic Party. -(The percentage of people living in rural areas in a given state) , if the incumbent party is the Republican Party.	The census survey nearest to a given election year from Census of Bureau (Access: 12/12/2013).
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Table A.4.(cont'd)

Percentage of Blacks	The percentage of people that are black.	The percentage of people that are black, if the incumbent party is the Democratic Party. -(The percentage of people that are black), if the incumbent party is the Republican Party.	The census survey nearest to a given election year from Census of Bureau (Access: 12/12/2013).
Percentage of Hispanics	The percentage of people that are Hispanic.	The percentage of people that are Hispanic, if the incumbent party is the Democratic Party. -(The percentage of people that are Hispanic) , if the incumbent party is the Republican Party.	The census survey nearest to a given election year from Census of Bureau (Access: 12/12/2013).
Immigrants	Four-year average number of people naturalized in a state. (unit: thousand people)	Four-year average number of people naturalized in a state, if the incumbent party is the Democratic Party. -(Four-year average number of people naturalized in a state) , if the incumbent party is the Republican Party. (unit: thousand people)	The Department of Homeland Security (Access: 12/12/2013).
Log Median Income		Log of median income in each state during the election year.	Census of Bureau (Access: 12/12/2013).

Table A.4.(cont'd)

Unemployment Rate		Unemployment Rate in each state during the election year.	Bureau of Labor Statistics (Access: 12/12/2013).
In-Party Governor	The governor of the state is from the incumbent party during the election year.	The governor of the state is from the incumbent party during the election year.	The US50.com (Access: 12/12/2013).
(State-Owned) Senate Seat		1, if at least one of the senators from the state during the congressional term nearest to the election year is affiliated with the incumbent party. 0, none of the senators from the state during the congressional term nearest to the election year is affiliated with the incumbent party.	Voteview.com (Access: 12/12/2013).
Share of State-Owned House Seats	The percentage of House representatives elected from the state that are affiliated with the incumbent party.	The percentage of House representatives elected from the state that are affiliated with the incumbent party.	The Office of Clerk of House of Representatives
House Seat Share	The incumbent party's share of total House seats during the term nearest to the election year.		The Office of Clerk of House of Representatives

Table A.4.(cont'd)

Democrat	1, if the incumbent party is the Democratic Party; 0, otherwise.	Collected by Author
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Redistricting	States affected by redistricting in the presidential elections in 1992, 2004 and 2012 are coded as 1, and those that did not experience redistricting are coded as 0.	Census of Bureau (7/28/2014)
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Table A.5. Web Links in Chapter Three

Variables	Source	link
Percentage of Rural Population	The census survey nearest to a given election year from Census of Bureau (Access: 12/12/2013).	1990 and 2000: http://www.census.gov/compendia/statab/cats/population.html . 2010: http://www.census.gov/geo/reference/ua/urban-rural-2010.html
Percentage of Blacks	The census survey nearest to a given election year from Census of Bureau (Access: 12/12/2013).	http://www.census.gov/population/www/documentation/twps0056/twps0056.html .
Percentage of Hispanics	The census survey nearest to a given election year from Census of Bureau (Access: 12/12/2013).	http://www.census.gov/population/www/documentation/twps0056/twps0056.html .
Immigrants	The Department of Homeland Security (Access: 12/12/2013).	https://www.dhs.gov/yearbook-immigration-statistics .
Log Median Income	Census of Bureau (Access: 12/12/2013).	http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/income/data/statemedian/ .
Unemployment Rate	Bureau of Labor Statistics (Access: 12/12/2013).	http://www.bls.gov/schedule/archives/all_nr.htm#SRGUNE .
In-Party Governor	Partisanship of governors from The US50.com (Access: 12/12/2013).	http://www.theus50.com/ .
(State-Own) Senate Seat	Voteview.com (Access: 12/12/2013).	http://voteview.com/downloads.asp .
Share of (State-Own) House Seats	The Office of Clerk of House of Representatives	http://clerk.house.gov/member_info/electionInfo/ .

Table A.5.(cont'd)

House Seat Share	The Office of Clerk of House of Representatives.	http://history.house.gov/Institution/Party-Divisions/Party-Divisions/ .
Redistricting	Census of Bureau (7/28/2014)	https://www.census.gov/geo/maps-data/maps/reference.html .

Table A.6. Summary Statistics for Chapter Three

	Mean	Standard Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
Incumbent Concentration of Votes	3.53	3.08	9.80e-07	13.44
Incumbent State-Level Vote Shares	47.03	8.89	24.75	71.61
Incumbent Party Cohesion	84.36	4.15	78.62	90.07
South	.26		0	1
In-Party Governor	.40		0	1
Percentage of Hispanic People	9.06	9.67	0	1
Percentage of Black People	10.97	9.47	0	1
Rural Population	25.74	13.89	5.05	61.34
Immigrant (thousand people)	13.32	29.91	.19	231.74
Democrat	.5		0	1
House Seat Share		.17	.52	.99
Share of (State-Owned) House Seats	45.14	26.04	0	100
Redistricting	.22		0	1
Senate Seats	.66		0	1
State Log Median Income	10.86	.16	10.39	11.19
State Unemployment Rate	5.71	1.72	2.2	11.3
Previous Vote Shares	49.56	8.43	24.08	71.85

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