Assessing the Independence of State Parties:

Issue Ownership and Morality Politics in US State Party Platforms

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By

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The undersigned, appointed by the dean of the Graduate School,

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ASSESSING THE INDEPENDENCE OF STATE PARTIES:

ISSUE OWNERSHIP AND MORALITY POLITICS IN US STATE PARTY PLATFORMS

Presented by Nicole Renee Shoaf

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DEDICATION

I am fortunate to have a wonderful, supportive family. My parents taught me to think for myself and dismiss the idea that I aimed too high or asked for too much. My wonderful husband has been at my side through the highs and lows of my educational journey. For him, I promise not to pursue another degree anytime soon.

I would like to dedicate this work to my Dad, who sparked my interest in politics long ago. He taught me to question the things I thought I knew and thought I believed. I learned the value in admitting what I do not know, and acknowledging when my opinions are unsustainable. We still have debates that last for hours, much to the despair of those around us. I love our exchanges and learn just as much when I lose as when I win.

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ABSTRACT

This study uses party platforms to assess the degree of independence between state and national political parties in the United States in light of issue ownership theory and morality politics. Utilizing a coding scheme adapted from the Comparative Manifesto Project, I analyze the ideology and content of 80 Democratic and Republican state party platforms from 2008-2010.

I uncover substantial variations among state party platforms and findings suggest that state parties manage to maintain a significant level of independence from the national parties. Some of the findings suggest our current understanding of state party politics is inadequate. For example, contrary to expectations, Republican state party platforms show more ideological variation than their Democratic counterparts. In contrast to national patterns, Democratic state party platforms conform more consistently with issue ownership theory than their Republican counterparts. And Democratic state party platforms are significantly more likely to balance their progressive policy preferences with conservative party interests.

CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

> *Red folks are NASCAR-lovin', gun-ownin', God-fearin' Republicans who mostly inhabit the rural, suburban, and small-town heartland stretching from the Deep South through the Great Plains and into the mountain states. Blue types, by contrast, are highly secular, latte-sipping, diversity-embracing Democrats concentrated in the urban areas on the two coasts and around the Great Lakes.[1]*

When most Americans think about political parties, they think about national parties. The quotation above offers a stereotypical portrait of parties in America – one that is flattering to neither party. If this is how popular culture views parties based upon caricatures of the national organizations, some of the assumptions held regarding Democrats and Republicans may be seriously flawed. What it means to be typical differs in New Jersey, Montana, and Alabama. The meanings of liberal and conservative change from Mississippi to Massachusetts. As such, variation in state parties should not come as a surprise.

Academics have studied American political parties for decades, but have failed to account fully for their impact, in part, because the focus is limited too often to national parties. There are not two American parties headquartered in D.C., but 102 parties scattered across the country. Focusing disproportionately at the national level provides only a superficial understanding of the importance of political parties. By not digging deeper, by discounting the behavior of state parties, our theories remain tentative and our conclusions incomplete. Discovering how state political parties behave is critically

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[1] Jay Tolson, "How Deep the Divide?" US News & World Report, October 24, 2004 42-50.

important to understanding the American party system. To what degree do state parties behave independently of the national party that shares their name? What issues do state parties care about? How do parties under the same partisan banner vary across the country, and what difference do these deviations make? If there is variation in party values and interests across states and between national and state parties, we need to know what they are to fully understand what the labels *Democrat* and *Republican* mean.

The quotation above suggests that there are substantial differences between the major American parties linked to distinct sets of priorities and regions. Survey and election results corroborate the claims, in part, but the observation neglects the relevance of state party organizations. I employ issue ownership theory and morality politics to assess state party platforms in an effort to understand better the degree to which state parties behave independently of their national counterparts. This analysis is an essential step towards a more complete understanding of the role of parties in the United States.

Issue ownership theory suggests that parties will focus on policy areas voters assume they are most capable of handling. For example, the Republican Party is generally perceived as more capable of controlling crime and the Democratic Party is seen as better suited for environmental protection, thus the parties are expected to focus on the issues they have an advantage on. These perceptions of party competence extend across elections and are not linked directly to specific candidates; rather these are the relative advantages the parties have at the onset of an election due to the pre-existing expectations of voters. Issue ownership theory was developed at the national

level to explain party behavior. Although frequently tested in national elections and applied to campaigns for state office, this is among the first direct applications of issue ownership to state parties. This is an important step to understanding the behavior of state parties.

In this project I examine how state party platforms tackle morality policies. Morality politics involves those issues that address the legal sanctioning of a particular set of values. These issues are tightly linked to core principles, are technically simple, are highly salient, and often spark intense policy debates. The proper role of religion in the public sphere, gay rights, stem cell research, and abortion policy are all examples of morality policies. Policies falling into this category are expected to inspire a set of political behaviors distinct from those stimulated by economic issues. In addition, issue ownership theory expects Republicans to address issues of morality politics more often than their Democratic counterparts because upholding traditional morality is seen as a Republican strength. However, the high saliency of morality policies places tremendous pressure on Democrats to address these issues as well. If we have "God-fearin'" Republicans and "highly secular" Democrats, what does this mean for discussions of public policy related to core moral principles? I assess how state party platforms address morality politics and compare the treatment of these issues between the national and state levels.

My objective is to assess state party platforms in light of issue ownership theory and morality politics for insights into the role of state parties in the American party system. This is an immense task to undertake. One of the most challenging aspects of

state-level research is the collection and organization of data. States' interest in and

capacity to collect information that is comparable nationally varies. Officially compiled

data from state agencies are often produced in various formats using inconsistent

definitions and methodologies. Moreover, the professionalism of state legislatures vary

widely, bureaucratic discretion and competency differs dramatically, and the public

availability of complied data is uneven. If the complications from formal institutional

limitations were not enough, each state party is an independent entity accountable to

no higher authority. The national parties do not control the behavior of the state

parties, the rhetoric of state party members, or the candidates running under the party

name.

Despite the inherent difficulties, there are ways to uncover the values, goals, and

behavior of state political parties. One way to assess state parties is to look at the

official documents they produce. Official outputs expose parties' priorities and provide

insights into how they perceive their political environment. Nearly all state parties

maintain websites, although the quality, content, and updating patterns vary

dramatically, and it is often unclear who controls the site. Many state parties regularly

engage in mailing campaigns during election seasons and others actively engage

members in fundraising campaigns and social events. Yet, official state party outputs are

irregular and often difficult to compare. Fortunately, platforms serve as the public face

of the parties and offer a window into the role state parties play in the American

political system. A platform is a formal declaration of principles and policy preferences

adopted by a political party. While the internal structure and content of platforms vary,

each addresses a collection of issues salient to the party and expresses the party's values and policy preferences. Unlike many other behaviors, most state parties compose party platforms, just as their national counterparts do, and this provides an ideal tool in the investigation of the role of state parties in the American party system.

State Party Platforms as Demonstrations of Independence

Despite their limited resources, 80 percent of state political parties opt to develop unique state party platforms, rather than simply adopting the platform of their national counterpart. Because state parties elect to spend their limited resources drafting and gathering support for their own platform, it suggests that at least some state parties feel that their interests are not fully or accurately reflected in the national platforms. National platforms need to appeal nationally to a large and diverse constituency, whereas the audiences for state party platforms are smaller and more homogeneous. Moreover, the state political environment may not be favorable to some national planks. When state political interests have more extremist policy preferences, they may feel that the national party platform does not take strong enough stances. Conversely, more moderate or competitive states may find that the national party platforms are too severe in their policy stances. In either case, by developing their own platforms, state parties are able to articulate policy preferences that are more in line with the current political environment of the state.

Despite the open availability of state party platforms, these documents receive virtually no news coverage and little scholarly attention. In part, this is not surprising. News is big business and the media's preference for sexy, dramatic material is well

documented (Iyengar and Kinder 1987, for starters). Although less sexy than other political sources, platforms do provide ample material for a compelling story. Within state party platforms we can see both extreme policy positions and stances so weak as to utter the party's position meaningless. Moreover, platforms often demonstrate intense focus on some issues while completely ignoring others. Analysis of these patterns offers a glimpse of the parties' hearts, exposing parties' values and policy priorities. It is from here that we can develop a comprehensive understanding of the role and independence of state parties.

Dissertation Outline

Chapter 2 introduces state party platforms and explores their purpose and development. Although state parties have been drafting platforms for decades, they consistently receive virtually no public or scholarly attention. While national party platforms are seldom highlighted, they attract significantly more scholarly interest and enjoy more public visibility. As a result, most are unaware state party platforms exist, few are privy to their substance, and almost no one has attempted to analyze their content systematically.

In chapter 3 I describe the core data used in this analysis and provide a full list of platforms. I assess party platforms using traditional manual content analysis and detail the specific coding procedures employed. Researchers on the Comparative Manifesto Project have analyzed the content of party platforms for decades and in this study I utilize a coding scheme adapted from the one developed by the CMP. In this chapter I

also include a brief overview of state party platform content, along with comparisons to national party platforms.

In chapter 4 I provide a general descriptive analysis of state party platforms, a necessary step because state party platforms are so poorly understood. This chapter discusses the length of party platforms and what we can learn from parties' decisions to produce lengthy platforms. All of the exiting literature regarding state party platforms focuses on platform ideology, and I employ two separate ideology measures to determine the ideology of state party platforms in 2008-2010. I conclude chapter 4 by discussing patterns and lessons from state party platform ideology.

In chapter 5 I use state party platforms to assess issue ownership theory. Issue ownership sets up a series of expectations for party behavior; however, few attempts have been made to test the theory directly using state party behavior. Results indicate that state parties do, in fact, adhere to the general expectations of issue ownership theory, although some of the results run contrary to national-level findings, suggesting interesting patterns of state party independence.

In chapter 6 I examine the values, rhetoric, and behavior of state party platforms on a specific subset of policies known as morality policies. The high salience of morality policies makes this a good policy area to begin deeper analysis of platform content. In addition, much policy movement on these issues occurs at the state level, further inviting deviation from national platforms. Findings highlight significant differences among the parties at the state level as well as dramatic deviations of state party platforms from national platforms.

Finally, in chapter 7 I wrap up this analysis and provide an overview of my findings. I include a discussion of the significance of these findings and offer suggestions for future research.

CHAPTER 2
INTRODUCTION TO STATE PARTY PLATFORMS

*Republicans are very good at describing things in black and white;
Democrats are very good at describing the 11 shades of gray.[2]*

Despite the conservative nature of the state, the 2004 Arkansas Democratic

Party platform forcefully advocated for the legalization of gay marriage. When the

committee met to draft the party's 2006 platform, they chose to remove the pro-gay

marriage plank in its entirety, eliminating all mention of sexual orientation. While state

party platforms receive relatively little media attention, without the involvement of the

local media, the plank's removal might have gone unnoticed. Although the debate at the

convention centered on the platform's treatment of immigration, the media focused on

the removal of the gay rights plank. The reaction to the removal of the gay rights plank

ignited took the platform chair by surprise. In some respects, this may be surprising.

After all, morality policies are highly salient technically simple. Gay marriage was a

frequent topic of discussion in the 2004 general election on the national stage and a

contentious issue in the state of Arkansas. On the other hand, Arkansas Democrats on

the platform committee recognized that in 2006 the political climate did not support a

strong gay rights position and felt that the state had effectively settled the gay marriage

issue less than two years prior with the passage of a constitutional amendment

prohibiting same-sex marriage. Little could be accomplished by including a forceful gay

rights plank, but there was ample opportunity for a strong plank to do the party

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[2] Joseph C. Wilson, US Diplomat.

damage. This internal struggle to decide what Arkansas Democrats stand for combines the forces of individual committee members, elected officials with their own agendas, party activists, public expectations and the news media. Consistent with the national Democratic Party, in 2004 Arkansas Democrats stood firmly in support of gay rights, but quickly shifted to apparent indifference just two short years later. The decision was made strategically, with little consideration for possible emotional blowback.

This process repeats itself every two years in 100 state parties across the United States. Each summer groups crowd around wooden conference tables to hash out what it means to be a Republican/Democrat of the great state of _____ , just as the founding fathers hashed out a Constitution – albeit with the luxury of air conditioning.

If these state party platforms have no meaning, no importance, then no one would surrender their time to such an inconsequential task. The existence of so many state party platforms and the exertion necessary for their cultivation suggests they serve a purpose and hold real value. Despite the insight these platforms might provide and their importance to state parties, no one has ever given these documents more than a cursory look. I intend to remedy this oversight.

The Relevance of State Political Parties

It is not possible to understand the differences in the way sovereign states carry out the processes of government without understanding the type of party whose representatives are making the decisions that affect the health, education, and welfare of its citizens.[3]

Conventional wisdom suggests that the United States has but two viable political parties. In a two-party system, other parties are intriguing, but hold very little political

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[3] Morehouse, 1981, 29.

potential and we have just two political alternatives – Democrats and Republicans. While intuitive, this perception of the US as a strict two-party system is inaccurate and the reality of our party system is hidden behind the Democrat and Republican Party labels. Our federal system creates not just layers of government, but layers of parties and the organization, behavior, and values of parties vary greatly across the states, even when operating under a common party banner.

The importance of states can be traced back to the *Federalist Papers* in which James Madison argues that the increased power of the national government in the proposed constitution would not pose a significant threat because of the peoples' "natural attachment to their state governments" (Madison 1788). Yet, although our natural attachments were expected to link us to our states and despite the closeness of the states to the people, the public is simply not that interested in state politics or state government. Local government receives some attention because the leaders are members of the immediate community and the local consequences of policy are clear, but national politics is flashy, campaigns flush, and the policy implications broad. States are left out in the cold.

History and current political environments converge to create party systems. Both factors contribute to the patterns of organization and behavior we witness today and because these factors change, "party systems evolve; they are not made" (Key 1967, 218). The changing federal system is just one example of how evolving political environments spur party system changes. Federalism is the division of authority between levels of government, but the practice of federalism changes. Today, divisions

are less clear and there is heightened interdependence between the layers. With the

passage of the 16th Amendment and the rise of the federal grants system, the national

government expects states to implement federal policy and states increasingly rely on

the federal government to close ever-widening budget gaps. As such, the role of parties

in the federal system are evolving as the role states are beings asked to play changes.

Repeated attempts to move towards devolution and government reforms resulted in a

shift of federal social program implementation onto the states. As the role of the states

expands, we must examine every level to understand fully the American party system.

The degree to which state parties are able to operate independently of national

parties is central to our understanding of the American party system. As V.O. Key wrote

in 1967, "National issues, campaigns and parties project themselves into the affairs of

the states" and while this is as true now as it was then, national projections only

influence, they do not control, state outcomes. Maintaining independence from the

national government and the national parties is a constant struggle for states, especially

in the era of grants and the rise of the welfare state. In addition, the national parties

have pushed for a greater degree of consistency between national and state parties.

Observers screeched about the trend towards nationalization of political parties

witnessed in the 1960s and 1970s and insisted that such trends would lead to

ideological consolidation of state parties in line with national parties (Bibby 1979;

Kayden 1980; Epstein 1982; Conway 1983; Kayden and Mahe 1985; Reichley 1985;

Wekkin 1984, 1985; Frantzich 1986; Lunch 1987). However difficult, state parties can

actively push for independence from their national counterparts. Scheduling state

(especially gubernatorial) elections in off years can help distance state and national outcomes, for example (Key 1967; Cleary and Hertzke 2006).

National parties work on a four year cycle where nearly all behavior is concentrated on presidential year races. While midterm congressional races are certainly important, they attract far less money, attention, and turnout. The political calendars of state parties, on the other hand, may be very different. While presidential year races are the highlight of political struggles, state parties oversee a variety of other races, including congressional elections, campaigns for governor (and other statewide executive offices), state legislature, state judicial positions, as well as a variety of ballot propositions. At the national level the parties want to win the White House, and gain control of at least one chamber of Congress. At the state level, the aims are far more varied. This means that the political environments state parties operate in are very different from what the national parties experience, and may be very different from one another. Not only do we not fully understand what state parties do on a regular basis, we do not know how these environmental differences impact party behavior.

In addition to variation in policy preferences and values, state parties differ with regard to history, organization, and professionalism.[4] Some state parties are well-staffed by competent professionals who maintain reliable records and run professional organizations. Other state parties, by contrast, rely almost entirely on activists and volunteers with little organizational experience. The record keeping systems of these

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[4] Blair and Barth (2005) and Flentje and Aistrup (2010) provide solid updated descriptions of the political environments and party systems for Arkansas and Kansas. Although both states are perceived as conservative nationally, a deeper understanding of these states highlights state variations.

parties are far less dependable and the party activities less consistent. These differences in party organization and professionalism are linked to both history and contemporary political environments. I expect the age of the state party, the state's attitude towards government and parties, the style of political leadership, and the competitiveness of the state to influence the organization and professionalism of state parties, as well as the prevalence and quality of state party platforms.[5]

Even if we were satisfied with our limited knowledge of state parties, many of our conclusions are the result of very dated research. As states have been asked to take on increased responsibility for the implementation of federal policy and as the strength and role of political parties have been affected by electoral reforms, the roles of states and parties have likely changed in ways we do not yet understand. Some older studies of state parties include mentions of state party platforms, but their treatment has been limited. Key (1967) tells us that interest groups use platforms to gain insight into which party would grant them greater access and behave more consistently with their preferences. Morehouse (1981) suggests that governors take state party platforms seriously and intend to implement platform policies once in office.

While our understanding of political parties has progressed significantly, we still have a relatively poor understanding of how state parties operate. State party platforms

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[5] I contacted a number of state parties asking if they produced a platform in 2008 or 2010. The responses I received from official party contacts varied significantly. Some were quick to forward copies of their most recent platform, while others admitted they were not sure whether their party engaged in platform development. One party official indicated a platform existed, but referred me to the Republican National Committee. Other party contacts simply ignored information requests or referred me to the party website for platform information (platforms were not present on these website; I checked party websites before contacting any party officials directly).

are intrinsically interesting and provide insight into poorly understood state political

parties. This is where I will begin.

The Purpose and Function of Party Platforms

Before we can appreciate the content of state party platforms, it is necessary to

understand their function. National and state political parties regularly compose and

ratify party platforms that reflect the parties' beliefs and policy agendas (Putnam and

Campbell 2010; Wilcox and Robinson 2011). While voters rarely read party platforms in

their entirety, the messages are transmitted to the electorate through media coverage,

campaign materials, political advertisements, and campaign speeches (Erikson,

Mackuen, and Stimson 2002; Paddock 2005). Despite the potential of party platforms to

provide insight into the American party system, relatively little research has taken

advantage of the available data, and most studies have focused on the readily accessible

national party platforms (Ginsberg 1972; 1976; Pomper 1967). Coffey's (2011), Kidd's

(2008), and Paddock's (2005) analyses of state party platforms in search of American

party polarization are rare, notable examples of state party platform analysis. These

studies are limited, however, by the authors' exclusive focus on the platform's ideology,

rather than a more thorough analysis of content. Paddock's (1991; 1992; 2005) focus on

platform ideology in seven issue categories is more specific than Kidd's (2008) or

Coffey's (2011) analyses. Yet, Paddock's decision to code platforms with paragraphs

acting as the unit of analysis introduces considerable validity concerns.[6] Paddock

examined state party platforms for insight into state party polarization and intra-party

integration. He found evidence of modest, but increasing party polarization, as well as

significant intra-party divergence. While state parties feel the influence of national

political trends, it appears they maintain significant independence from national parties,

and each other (Paddock 1991; 2005).

Platforms serve several purposes and are written for both internal and external

audiences, which often lead to considerable complexity (Harmel et al. 1995). Party

platforms, at any level, serve as an important branding tool, allowing parties the

opportunity to influence how they are perceived by the public. Whereas political

campaigns are beleaguered often by media involvement, platforms provide an avenue

of largely unmediated communication. Platforms allow parties to project an image to

the public, but also to politicians, activists, and scholars. Just as retailers and car

manufacturers craft images through their marketing, parties can do so through

platforms. Consider the advertising campaigns for luxury cars so prevalent during the

holiday season. These feature an expensive car being given as a gift, in front of an

impressive home, with beautiful people in designer clothes. Millions are exposed to

these ad campaigns – but their purpose is more to build upon the car company's

reputation than to convince individuals to purchase their product. Parties have the

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[6] Given the daunting data collection limitations, Paddock's studies focus on selected subsets of state party platforms and analyze only some states in some years. For details of the data used, see Paddock (2005). Paddock's studies used a coding scheme modified from Ginsberg (1972; 1976).

opportunity to act similarly by creating a document that reflects how they want to be perceived.

In a nation with few viable political parties, Democrats and Republicans must manage big-tent coalitions. Invariably, the need to appeal to (and avoid alienating) various groups with inconsistent views necessitates compromise and careful control of messages. A well-designed platform can signal to interest groups that the party is committed to a shared ambition and shore up political and financial support, even when parties are unwilling to adopt strong planks groups often prefer.[7] Content and phrasing help interest group determine if they will have access to officials, if elected (Morehouse 1981).

Interest groups can look to party platforms to identify which issues the parties perceive as most important, with the assumption that issues not addressed are seen as less critical. Consider, for example, that more than 17 percent of the Connecticut Republican platform is focused on free market principles, deregulation, and individual enterprise, while the average for all Republican state platforms is only 6.5 percent. With nearly one-fifth of the platform focused on this narrow set of issues, their salience to the Connecticut Republicans is unambiguous.

In addition, groups can use party platforms to gauge a party's position on a particular issue and determine how moderate or extreme a party's preferences are. For

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[7] Interest groups may play a passive role by simply listening to state parties' positions, but they may also take an active role in the development of state party platforms by meeting with platforms drafters to discuss concerns or offering platform writers language they would like to see. For example, during the drafting of the Arkansas Democrats' 2006 platform the National Abortion and Reproductive Rights Action League (NARAL) offered language regarding abortion they wanted to see, but the final draft included only a simple statement supporting privacy rights.

example, Illinois Republicans chose to include a strong pro-life statement in their

platform:

> Recognizing that the rights and needs of children begin at conception, the Republican Party of Illinois embraces the Right to Life of innocent unborn children and supports reform proposals protecting that right and limiting the practice of abortion in Illinois. We believe… the unborn child has a fundamental individual right to life, which cannot be infringed. The Party affirms its support for a human life amendment… to the U.S. Constitution and we endorse making clear that the Fourteenth Amendment's protection applies to unborn children…. We urge the reversal of Roe v. Wade.[8]

In contrast, Texas Democrats chose to use a more measured tone in their

support of reproductive rights. While indicating a pro-choice stance, the tone reflects

acknowledgement of conservative voices of many Texas Democrats:

> Texas Democrats trust the women of Texas to make personal and responsible decisions about when and whether to bear children, in consultation with their family, their physician, personal conscience or their God… (We) support prevention measures which have proven effective at reducing unintended pregnancies, and which would reduce the rate of abortion.[9]

Similarly, West Virginia Democrats opted for a pro-choice stance that focuses on

the issue of personal liberty and small government, without an overt or lengthy

discussion of abortion: "West Virginia Democrats believe that government… should not

interfere with an individual's or family's right to make a personal or medical decision."[10]

These examples highlight how state party platforms are crafted to appease party

factions when conservative members of Democratic state parties are reluctant to

support liberal national platform planks, or the reverse in state Republican parties.

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[8] 2008 Illinois Republican Platform.
[9] 2010 Texas Democratic Platform.
[10] 2008 West Virginia Party Platform.

Platforms may, in fact, be crafted to signal policy positions to groups without unnecessarily inflaming passions.

The Development of State Party Platforms

Platforms, crafted by activists and public officials, allow political elites to clarify and explicate shared values and policy preferences. This could help parties develop some level of internal consistency and coherence, as well as foster unity among those running for office. State political parties use a variety of methods to develop state platforms, with varying patterns of centralization in the process and different degrees of elite control. In the Arkansas Democratic Party, a platform committee is appointed by the state party's executive director with input from committee members and political candidates to ensure adequate diversity. The platform committee consists of approximately 15-20 members and represents a variety of interests within the Arkansas Democratic Party including variation in sex, race, geography, and ideology, and includes individuals representing key factions of the party including agricultural interests, teachers, the gubernatorial candidate's campaign, and proponents of equal rights for racial and ethnic groups, women, and other social minorities.

Like many other state parties, Arkansas Democrats begin their bi-annual drafting process with a preference for the status quo. They begin with the previous platform as the first draft and make changes as necessary, taking into consideration the political positions of key Democratic candidates, as well as the political climate of the state. The platform committee breaks into smaller subcommittees to address various sections of the platform, debate changes, and consider input from interested groups. After

subcommittees develop a draft, the full committee meets again to iron out any disagreements. Shortly before the state party convention, the committee releases the draft platform. Immediately prior to the convention a public hearing is held to elicit feedback from party delegates. A final round of changes is made after the public hearing and the final draft is presented to delegates at the convention and offered for approval.

The Arkansas Democrats use a process comparable to many other state parties; Maine Republicans use a similar system, and Missouri Democrats' newly adopted procedures establish a comparable process. However, not all state parties rely on a process as centralized as this. In Colorado, local committees participate in selecting members of the platform committee, and these delegates serve alongside elected Democratic officials on the state platform committee. The committee is responsible for drafting a platform and presenting it at the state party convention where only planks receiving support of two-thirds of delegates at the state convention are included in the final platform.

Some state parties use an even more decentralized process. The Texas Republican Party emphasizes participation at the precinct and county levels where the committees consider policy positions directly. Approved policy positions are sent up a level, and finally are considered at the state party convention where positions are voted on by all present delegates.

Within each of these methods are internal debates and struggles for the party's attention. State party platforms cannot address every issue in full, and agreement on party positions is impossible at times. The big-tent nature of American parties, even at

the state level, demands that they balance the needs of factions and these demands

shape final platforms.

Patterns in State Party Platforms

When parties struggle to incorporate the preferences of diverse interests,

intriguing compromises are made and state party platforms include interesting patterns

of variation that underscore their divergence from the national platforms. State party

platforms may change significantly over time and frequently include planks that are a

reflection of the specific time when they were written. For example, in 2010 several

state party platforms called for action in response to the United States Supreme Court

decision in Citizens United v. FEC. This highlights an issue tied to a current and time-

sensitive political debate.[11] Other platform planks are of limited interest, not because of

time sensitivity, but because of the limitations of geographical interest. The need to

eradicate an agricultural pest present in the southwest, or control the populations of

invasive species in the Great Lakes may not inspire national concern or have sufficient

support to make it into the national platforms. These issues may, however, be of critical

interest to state leaders, activists, and voters, and it makes good political sense for state

parties to address such local concerns. For example:

> *The Asian carp must be kept out of the Great Lakes… Fighting*
> *these invasive species has proven to be a significant economic drain —*
> *every year, the Great Lakes region spends $30 million to keep water pipes*
> *from becoming clogged with zebra mussels.[12]*

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[11] "We call for… legislation remedying the deleterious effects of Citizens United v. FEC" (2010 Washington Democrats).
[12] 2010 Michigan Democratic Party platform.

Here, we have an example of an issue with significant state and regional

significance – invasive species in the Great Lakes, but of little national concern.[13]

Although the economic impacts of invasive species in the Great Lakes may eventually be

felt outside of the region, it lacks the national interest to merit attention in a national

party platform.

Other times, some of the planks found in state party platforms reflect policy

positions on seemingly bizarre topics. Consider, for example, the Washington State

Republican platform from 1992. This platform included a plank opposing the teaching of

"New Age Movement Philosophy, including reincarnation, mystical powers, and Satan

worship" in public schools (Wilcox and Robinson 2011, 108). This plank was considered

important enough to be included in the final draft of the Washington State Republican

platform, but it is unlikely that the teaching of Satan worship was ever really a

significant problem in public schools.

Conclusion

State party platforms provide state parties with an opportunity to express party

values and articulate policy preferences without sound bite editing – a rare opportunity

for unmediated party communication with interest groups, activists, and the public. The

process of revision and compromise within the state parties provides a fascinating

window into the parties' policy preferences and political priorities, and a wonderful

opportunity to assess the independence of state parties. Now that the purpose and

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[13] The Asian carp has a peculiar habit of leaping into the air when the water is disturbed and can be dangerous to unprotected boaters and decimate native species populations.

development of state party platforms is clear, the next chapter will discuss the

platforms utilized in this study and will provide a detailed description of the coding

scheme used to assess platform content.

All of the political parties have two faces – a public face turned towards the media, the voters, and the rest of the world, and an inward-looking face reserved for the initiated, activists, elected representatives and leaders, who have access to their secret garden.[14]

Platform Inventory

The primary data I analyze are from the platforms written by the Democratic and Republican state parties in 2008 and 2010. Most platforms were collected from state party websites between August 2010 and August 2011, while a few others were obtained from direct email communication with state party officials and later website searches. For comparison purposes, the national platforms for the Democratic and Republican parties are included as well.

Not all state parties choose to develop unique platforms each election season. A few state parties prefer to adopt a set of more general principles that are maintained on a semi-permanent basis. In this sample, five state parties selected this route.[15] State parties that opt to draft their platforms as sets of semi-permanent principles generally do so very concisely. These five state party platforms are among the shortest in the current sample, with fewer than 800 words in each and three under 300 words.

In addition, a few other state parties prefer to simply adopt the national party platform as their own. In this sample, four state parties embraced a national platform

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[14] Charlot 1989, 361.
[15] State parties with semi-permanent platforms: Alabama Democrats, Alabama Republicans, Connecticut Republicans, Maryland Republicans, and Oklahoma Democrats.

and are not included in the subsequent analysis.[16] Other state political parties decline

any involvement with party platforms. They do not develop their own platform, adopt a

set of enduring principles, or formally adopt the national party's platform. It appears

that 16 state political parties choose this route. In total, the dataset contains 80 unique

state party platforms from the 2008-2010 election seasons and two national party

platforms. Table 1 provides an overview of the platforms included in this analysis.

State	Democratic Platform Year	Republican Platform Year	State	Democratic Platform Year	Republican Platform Year
National	2008	2008	Montana	2010	2010
Alabama	Permanent	Permanent	Nebraska	2010	2008
Alaska	2010	2010	Nevada	2010	2010
Arizona	2010	2010	New Hampshire	2010	2010
Arkansas	2010	2010	New Jersey	None	None
California	2010	2008	New Mexico	2010	2010
Colorado	2010	2010	New York	None	None
Connecticut	2010	Permanent	North Carolina	2008	2010
Delaware	2010	National	North Dakota	None	2010
Florida	None	2010	Ohio	National	None
Georgia	2010	2010	Oklahoma	Permanent	2010
Hawaii	2010	2010	Oregon	2010	2010
Idaho	2010	2010	Pennsylvania	None	2010
Illinois	None	2008	Rhode Island	None	National
Indiana	2008	2010	South Carolina	2010	2010
Iowa	2010	2010	South Dakota	2010	2010
Kansas	2010	2010	Tennessee	None	None
Kentucky	None	National	Texas	2010	2010
Louisiana	None	2008	Utah	2010	2010
Maine	2010	2010	Vermont	2010	2010
Maryland	None	Permanent	Virginia	2010	2010
Massachusetts	2010	2010	Washington	2010	2010
Michigan	2010	2010	West Virginia	2008	2008
Minnesota	2008	2010	Wisconsin	2010	2010
Mississippi	2010	2008	Wyoming	2010	2010
Missouri	None	2008			

Table 1: State Party Platform Inventory

Coding Scheme

I use a coding scheme adapted from the Comparative Manifesto Project

(Volkens, et al 2011). The CMP is a large-scale effort to collect and analyze the party

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[16] State parties that formally adopted the national party platform as their own: Delaware Republicans, Kentucky Republicans, Ohio Democrats, and Rhode Island Republicans.

manifestos of countries around the world. Although the CMP began in 1979 as a

relatively small project, it has ballooned and now regularly analyzes more than 3,000

party manifestos from over 50 countries (Werner and Lacewell 2011). Because of the

CMP's extensive data collection, patterns can be traced over time and the cross national

dataset ensures that conclusions are not drawn from the peculiarities of a single nation.

CMP data allow researchers to conduct empirical tests of formal and spatial theories,

providing better insight into party behavior. To assess the strategic behavior of parties,

Rovney (2012) examined parties' tendencies to express ambiguous policy positions.

Ambiguous position taking is often seen as electorally advantageous because vague

policy positions are less likely to offend potential supporters. The more specific a party's

policy preferences, the more likely voters will find reason to object. Rovney (2012)

found that where a party's positions are further from the center, or more extreme, the

party tendss to emphasize these issues and take clear, unambiguous stances.

Alternatively on issue dimensions where a party's position is near the center, the party

is more likely to propose ambiguous policy preferences, de-emphasizing these issues,

and allowing them to appeal to a wider segment of the electorate. Contrary to spatial

theory, Rovney's (2012) findings suggest that parties often compete by blurring their

positions, rather than overt position taking.

     We can use CMP data to assess how parties react to their competitors' behavior

to understand better how the interaction of parties influences politics. Andrews and

Money (2009) found that as the number of parties competing in a political system

increases, the breadth of the ideological spectrum occupied by parties does as well.

Perhaps most interesting about Andrew's and Money's findings is that there appears to

be a natural limit to this pattern; as party systems expand beyond five parties, new

parties have difficulty finding a unique ideological space. Moreover, contrary to

expectations, a system's electoral rules only influence the number of parties, not their

ideological location or relative spacing (Andrews and Money 2009). Using CMP data,

Adams and Somer-Topcu (2009) examined how parties in a political system react to

ideological movements of other parties. They found that when a party makes a

significant ideological shift, its rivals will follow, and this reactive behavior is amplified

when the rival parties are ideologically close. It appears that parties react to public

opinion as well as the behavior of their opponents. Adams, et al (2004) found that a

shift in public opinion away from a party's ideological position spurs a reactive shift by

the parties. Although clear public opinion shifts prompt changes to party platforms, past

election results do not appear to have the same effect.

Researchers employing CMP data frequently come to very interesting

conclusions and uncover patterns previously hidden. Fineraas (2010) used CMP data to

uncover ties between the social and economic policy dimensions. Fineraas (2010) found

that when there is more party polarization on social issues, the political response to

income inequality will be feebler. In political systems with higher levels of polarization

on social issues, low income voters are less likely to coalesce around a single party.

When low income voters are fragmented, their political power is diminished and

government has less incentive to act on income inequality. The clear, tangible link

between social extremism and economic policy can make the impact of morality politics seem that much more important.

CMP research can also be used to understand current political trends. As we watch the European Union struggle with integration in difficult economic times, understanding the impact of integration for domestic politics is vitally important. Steiner and Martin (2012) put CMP data to work and found that as European economic integration increases, the economic positions taken by parties across the continent are more homogenous. This reduced variation in economic policy alternatives has had a dampening effect on electoral turnout.

Researchers have found numerous ways to use CMP data to examine a wide array of political behaviors and policy changes. Kittilson (2010) used CMP data to analyze the impact of increased gender diversity in legislatures,[17] and CMP data allowed Kim (2007) to examine the relationship between public confidence in parties and political institutions. Although researchers have used CMP data to test divergent theories in vastly different specialties, most research focuses on broad patterns at the national level, rather than more nuanced, sub-national patterns.

CMP data provides researchers with the ability to examine patterns through time and across many nations, as well as trace specific trends in single nations.[18] The CPM coding scheme is well documented in existing comparative research but is relatively

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[17] Increases of women holding legislative office leads to increasing focus on social justice in party platforms.

[18] For example, Jansen, Graaff, and Need (2011) used CMP to examine voting patterns in the Netherlands and Cochrane (2010) reassessed the role of ideology in the traditional "brokerage" model of Canadian politics.

unused in the American context. Existing research focuses exclusively on national party platforms; for example, Simas and Evans (2011) used CMP and American National Election Study (ANES) data to examine how voters are able to use national party platforms to assess presidential candidates; the more liberal the national party platform, the more liberal the presidential nominee is perceived. Budge and Hofferbert (1990) found that the platforms drafted by the national Democratic and Republican parties accurately indicate which ideological direction policy will move if either party is put into power. While Congress and the president are often able to thwart the policy ambitions of one another, but it appears that controlling the White House better positions parties to direct shifts in federal spending. Interestingly, Budge and Hofferbert (1990) found that the degree control over the shift in federal spending varied by policy area, suggesting that even when out of power, the parties retained some influence over certain policy areas. For example, even when out of power, planks from the Democratic Party platform regarding education are more likely to be implemented than planks from the national Republican platform. This project will apply the same rigorous analysis used for national party manifestos to US state party platforms.

Unit of Analysis

Consistent with previous work done by the Comparative Manifesto Project, the coding unit is a "quasi-sentence" or clause. A quasi-sentence is a clause no longer than a sentence that addresses only one policy argument. A sentence is often coded as a single unit, but long, complex sentences and lists are broken into several quasi-sentences when multiple policy arguments are included. This technique is the preferred

method for analyzing other political communications as well, including campaign advertisements and political speeches (Benoit 1999). Some political communication research relies on larger coding units of sentences or paragraphs, but this masks the variety of issues addressed and may lead to significantly biased results. The more precise quasi-sentence coding unit employed here allows for a more nuanced evaluation of state party platform content.

Computer coding programs have become increasingly popular in recent years, allowing for a single researcher to sift through enormous amounts of text quickly and with impressive reliability. However, with the use of computer programs, often context and an understanding of whether a particular word or phrase is positive or negative, liberal or conservative is lost. Most programs rely on simple word counts where the presence of specific words is used to measure content and the validity of the conclusions rest heavily on the quality of the coding dictionary. While this may be sufficient for some purposes, such methods fail to distinguish between policy positions or take into account the strength of policy statements. The incidence of the word "abortion" may be used as evidence of the topic's prevalence in the document, but more precise measures are needed to distinguish between pro-life and pro-choice policy positions, as well as rigid versus moderate stances. This loss of validity severely limits the value of computer content analysis for this project. Due to these lingering limitations in commonly available coding programs, I employ traditional human coding. One of the primary drawbacks to manual content analysis is that it is extraordinarily time consuming. Coding required me to read each state party platform and break the

content into discrete quasi-sentences. Then, I reviewed each platform a second time to assess the content of each quasi-sentence. Only then was I able to begin to build a usable dataset.

Too often, human content analysis research suffers from what is known as the "one manifesto – one coder" problem, which can raise significant reliability concerns (Mikhaylov, Laver, and Benoit 2012). To guard against reliability issues, I underwent extensive training under the supervision of a CMP training advisor who introduced the CMP coding scheme and supervised my progress through the formal CMP training procedures. Once I completed the final training test I began to code the state party platforms used in this study. In addition to the training I received from the CMP staff, I also checked my coding against the coding results of two additional CMP-trained coders. This redundancy helps to ensure maximum reliability in the coding results. The average intercoder reliability for state party platform ideology measures is .88 and .96 for the CMP and Franzmann and Kaiser (2006) methods, respectively. I coded all state party platforms between March 2011 and September 2011.

Coding Categories

I measure state parties' policy preferences using seven basic policy domain categories, with several subcategories within each to identify both the policy area mentioned in the quasi-sentence, as well as the direction of the policy preference. Once

platforms are broken into a series of quasi-sentences, one of 56 policy codes from eight

distinct policy domains was assigned (Table 2).[19]

	DOMAIN 1: External Relations	411	Technology and Infrastructure
101	Foreign Special Relationships: Positive	412	Controlled Economy
102	Foreign Special Relationships: Negative	413	Nationalisation
103	Anti-Imperialism	414	Economic Orthodoxy
104	Military: Positive	415	Marxist Analysis
105	Military: Negative	416	Sustainability
106	Peace		
107	Internationalism: Positive		DOMAIN 5: Welfare and Quality of Life
109	Internationalism: Negative	501	Environmental Protection
		502	Culture
	DOMAIN 2: Freedom and Democracy	503	Equality
200	Libertarianism	504	Welfare State: Positive
201	Freedom and Human Rights	505	Welfare State: Negative
202	Democracy	506	Education Expansion
203	Constitutionalism: Positive	507	Education Limitation
204	Constitutionalism: Negative	508	The Myth of Global Warming
	DOMAIN 3: Political System		DOMAIN 6: Fabric of Society
301	Federalism/States' Rights	601	National Way of life: Positive
302	Centralisation	602	National Way of life: Negative
303	Governmental & Administrative Efficiency	603	Traditional Morality: Positive
304	Political Corruption	604	Traditional Morality: Negative
305	Political Authority	605	Law and Order
		606	Civic Mindedness
	DOMAIN 4: Economy	607	Multiculturalism: Positive
401	Free Market Economy	608	Multiculturalism: Negative
402	Incentives		
403	Market Regulation		DOMAIN 7: Social Groups
404	Economic Planning	701	Labour Groups: Positive
405	Corporatism/ Mixed Economy	702	Labour Groups: Negative
406	Protectionism: Positive	703	Agriculture and Farmers: Positive
407	Protectionism: Negative	704	Middle Class and Professional Groups
408	Economic Goals	705	Underprivileged Minority Groups
409	Keynesian Demand Management	706	Non-economic Demographic Groups
410	Economic Growth		

Table 2: CMP Coding Categories

External Relations

In the policy domain of "external relations," eight subcoding categories exist.

Quasi-sentences addressing issues of external security, national defense, international

cooperation, and international negotiation are considered external relations and receive

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[19] See Appendix A for coding procedures and Appendix B for a full description of the modified CMP coding scheme.

a code between 101 and 109. Mentions of relations between the United States and the

United Kingdom, Mexico, or Canada receive codes 101 or 102, depending on whether

the relationship was mentioned favorably or negatively. Only two state parties

mentioned US relations with those nations with whom we have a special relationship –

Michigan Democrats and Texas Republicans and all seven policy mentions were positive.

Examples of positive foreign special relationships include, "We are committed to a

continuing strong relationship with Michigan's largest trading partner, Canada"[20] and

"We support policies, which strengthen Mexican democratic institutions, including

continued legal reform to address the issue of corruption."[21]

The 80 platforms analyzed in this study contained 340 positive mentions of the

US military, a third of which came from only five Republican state party platforms.[22]

Positive military references can take many forms, although mentions of terrorism and

vague statements in support of our troops are most common:

- The Missouri Republican Party supports…. all efforts to root out the agents of terror and protect Americans from the evils of terrorism.[23]
- We support actions taken against those who would seek to do us harm… and we support the men and women of the Connecticut National Guard and our Armed Forces who serve our nation with bravery and distinction.[24]

Sixty percent of the negative military mentions came from just four Democratic

state party platforms.[25] As with the positive military category, negative military

mentions took on a variety of forms. In some instances, state parties called for the

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[20] 2010 Michigan Democratic state party platform.
[21] 2010 Texas Republican state party platform.
[22] Texas (41), Oklahoma (21), Arkansas (17), Missouri (16), and South Carolina (15).
[23] 2008 Missouri Republican state party platform.
[24] 2010 Connecticut Democratic state party platform.
[25] Washington (22), Colorado (14), Wisconsin (13), and California (10).

ending of current military engagements, "We call for the closing of all U.S. bases in Iraq and Afghanistan, the end of funding for the U.S. occupation of those countries...."[26] In other cases, state parties proposed reductions in military spending, "Our military budget should be reduced with greater emphasis placed on economic development and diplomacy to achieve global security and curtail the undue influence of the 'Military Industrial Complex.'"[27]

Policy mentions related to international cooperation and unilateralism versus multilateral action receive codes of 107 or 109. Policy statements supportive of international cooperation, global aid, support for multinational organizations, etc. are positive internationalism statements (code 107). Again, just under a third of the 233 positive internationalism statements are found in just a few Democratic platforms.[28] Positive mentions of international cooperation often focus on how nations can work together to solve international problems, "International initiatives to reduce pollution, manage water supplies, reduce dependence on non-renewable energy, and promote voluntary family planning."[29]

Opposition to internationalism is coded as 109. While less common, these negative mentions of international cooperation show up 111 times, concentrated heavily in the Republican platforms from Texas, Oklahoma, and Arkansas. Texas Republicans make a strong statement against internationalism: "We urge Congress to

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[26] 2010 Colorado Democratic state party platform.
[27] 2010 Wisconsin Democratic state party platform.
[28] Washington (30), Iowa (27), Colorado (24), and California (20).
[29] 2010 Iowa Democratic state party platform.

evict the United Nations from the United States and eliminate any further

participation."[30]

Freedom and Democracy

The domain of "freedom and democracy" contains five subcategories for quasi-

sentences addressing freedom, democracy, civil rights, and constitutionalism. Codes

between 200 and 204 are assigned to these issues, and statements related to the

structure of government fall into this policy domain, "We must restore the balance of

power among the… branches of our Federal government and completely restore

Constitutional rights."[31] Policy references to voting laws fit squarely into the democracy

category, "Vermont Republicans believe that we must maintain the integrity of our

voting system for legal citizens of Vermont by having a requirement that every voter

produce positive identification to register and to vote."[32]

Specific mentions of the US and state constitutions also fall into the freedom and

democracy policy domain. Policy statements supporting the status quo of constitutions

belong in category 203 and include mentions of support for specific aspects of

constitutional documents, "The South Carolina Republican Party supports the 200+ year-

old Constitutional right of the people to keep and bear arms."[33] Opposition to current

constitutions or calls for constitutional amendments are coded as 204, "We support…. A

constitutional amendment setting term limits for the U.S. Congress."[34]

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[30] 2010 Texas Republican Party Platform.
[31] Code 200; 2010 Washington Democratic Party Platform.
[32] 2010 Vermont Republican Party Platform.
[33] 2010 South Carolina Party Platform.
[34] 2010 Oklahoma Republican state party platform.

Political Systems

The "political systems" domain covers policies related to federalism,

governmental efficiency and political authority, and such references receive codes of

301 to 305. Often, state parties argue for increased state-level discretion and for a

general federal hands-off approach to governance. California Republicans write "We

believe the state, not the federal government, should govern and dictate criminal

statutes,"[35] and Nebraska Democrats "oppose efforts to take away the right of the

people to determine education policy through their elected state and local boards of

education."[36] These statements focus on traditional limits of federalism and emphasize

state rights, and receive a code of 301. Concerns about governmental corruption also

fall into the political systems policy domain. For example, "(We) demand the criminal

prosecution of any State employee who lies or purposefully misrepresents facts at

public meetings,"[37] and "We expect the swift impeachment and removal from office of

officials who commit high crimes and misdemeanors."[38]

Economic Policy

The economic policy domain contains a broad range of economic issues. Codes

between 410 and 416 are assigned to policy statements related to the free market,

economic growth, and trade protectionism. A code of 401 is given to any policy

statements in support of the free market ideal, deregulation, and protection of private

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[35] 2008 California Republican Party Platform.
[36] 2010 Nebraska Democratic Party Platform.
[37] 2010 Wyoming Republican Party Platform.
[38] 2010 Wisconsin Democratic Party Platform.

property. Support for these policies is common in state party platforms, showing up

nearly 500 times. Examples include:

- We believe free, fair and competitive markets are best for both the producer and the consumer.[39]
- We will defend… private property from unnecessary government infringement, including state laws or regulations which erode property rights and inhibit the free use, the right to privacy, and the enjoyment of private property.[40]
- We believe that prosperity results from freedom, and that the unencumbered free market is the most efficient method of allocating resources and setting fair prices and wages with a minimum of government interference and regulations.[41]

While support for free market principles is a popular topic in state party

platforms, so are calls for government economic regulation, consumer protection, and

the protection of small businesses from large corporations (403). Economic regulation

can take many forms, as do calls for government action:

- We support requiring all lenders to meet acceptable standards for protecting reverse mortgage customers, mandating independent pre-loan counseling for all reverse mortgage applicants, and limiting lending fees.[42]
- We support enforcing anti-trust, regulatory legislation…. (and) establishing fair limits on bank fees, penalties.[43]

The 2008-2010 recession had a clear impact on the development of state party

platform and demands for limiting spending, balancing budgets, reducing the deficit

were common themes in both Democratic and Republican state party platforms (414):

- Utah Democrats have a firm and enduring belief in low taxes and balanced budgets.[44]

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[39] 2010 South Dakota Republican Party Platform.
[40] 2010 Montana Republican Party Platform.
[41] 2010 Montana Republican Party Platform.
[42] 2010 Michigan Democratic Party Platform.
[43] 2010 Iowa Democratic Party Platform.
[44] 2010 Utah Democratic Party Platform.

- We Democrats vow to put state government on a diet and balance our state budgets without raising taxes.[45]
- The Party calls on every level of government to return to sound fiscal management that provides effective and efficient government with a minimum amount of taxation. [46]

The economic policy domain also includes references to public infrastructure,

including support for highways, rail lines, and airport service (411):

- We support designating the transportation funds for maintenance, repair, support and usage of Vermont's highway, rail, aviation, and road infrastructure.[47]
- Montana Republicans believe Montana deserves legitimate, reasonable and efficient rail service. [48]

Along with mentions of transportation infrastructure, the subcategory of 411

includes references in support of technological infrastructure and vocational and

technological training:

- We support creating a public-private partnership to expand and enhance a statewide high speed Internet infrastructure that is both affordable and accessible to all.[49]
- We support efforts to build and retain a qualified workforce through increased training opportunities… (and) a commitment to career and technical education.[50]

Welfare and Quality of Life

Quasi-sentences coded between 501 and 508 are part of the "welfare and

quality of life" domain. This category contains a wide variety of policies related to

environmental protection, the welfare state, social justice, and education. Policy

statements supporting environmental protection, addressing climate change, reducing

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[45] 2010 South Dakota Democratic Party Platform.
[46] 2010 South Carolina Republican Party Platform.
[47] 2010 Vermont Republican Party Platform.
[48] 2010 Montana Republican Party Platform.
[49] 2010 Montana Democratic Party Platform.
[50] 2010 Virginia Democratic Party Platform.

pollution, and the protection of wildlife fall into category 501. Environmental protection

is a common theme in state party platforms, showing up more than 1,300 times. Some

statements in support of environmental protection are vague and express a broad

desire to be green, "We should encourage recycling to reduce waste, conservation of

energy including the use of renewable energy sources, and choosing products which are

not harmful to plants and wildlife."[51] In other cases, pro-environment policy preferences

are more specific and aggressive, "We support mandatory local and regional recycling of

paper, glass, metals, plastics and other reusable materials in order to reduce the need

for landfills."[52]

Discussions of the American welfare state belong in the welfare and quality of

life policy domain – including mentions of social security, Medicaid, Medicare, and low-

income housing. Policy statements supporting government provision of this social safety

net are coded as 504, while statements in opposition to a social safety net, statements

proposing government cuts to social welfare programs, and calls for the privatization of

welfare programs are coded as 505.

- (We) strongly oppose detrimental budget cuts in Medicare/Medicaid.[53]
- We support the recently enacted healthcare reform legislation as a first step in the process toward a quality universal single-payer health care system, independent of employment.[54]
- We support privatization of the Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid programs.[55]

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[51] 2010 Arkansas Republican Party Platform.
[52] 2008 North Carolina Democratic Party Platform.
[53] 2010 California Democratic Party Platform.
[54] 2010 Colorado Democratic Party Platform.
[55] 2010 Oklahoma Republican Party Platform.

As with issues related to the welfare state, discussions of education are separated into two categories. Calls for the expansion of public education to the improvement of public education (including increased public education funding) belong in category 506.

- We support low student-teacher ratios to enhance the quality of educational instruction.[56]
- We recognize the importance of Idaho's higher education system in continuing the education of our citizens.[57]

Statements opposing the public school system, calls for reduced public school funding, preferences for private schools, and support for public funding to private and parochial schools are coded as 507.

- We urge the Legislature to abolish property taxes for the purpose of funding schools and to shift the tax burden to a consumption-based tax while maintaining or reducing the overall tax burden.[58]
- We encourage the Governor and the Texas Legislature to enact child-centered school funding options – which fund the student, not schools or districts – to allow maximum freedom of choice in public, private or parochial education for all."[59]
- We are firmly against the establishment of universal pre-school programs in Minnesota.[60]

Fabric of Society

The policy domain containing codes 601 through 608 addresses the "fabric of society" and patriotism, religion, morality policies, and multiculturalism fall into this policy domain. Claims of patriotism and favorable mentions of founding ideas receive a code of 601, "The Party supports the preservation of our Republic, its ideals and

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[56] 2010 Nevada Democratic Party Platform.
[57] 2010 Idaho Republican Party Platform.
[58] 2010 Texas Republican Party Platform.
[59] 2010 Texas Republican Party Platform.
[60] 2010 Minnesota Republican Party Platform.

institutions for the good of all Americans and adamantly opposes the erosion of these

cherished freedoms."[61]

The fabric of society policy domain also includes all references to morality and

religious policies. Mentions to policies related to abortion, gambling, homosexuality,

religion, and sexual education all fall into this policy domain. Policy statements

supporting traditional moral or religious positions are coded as 603, and include

statements opposing the liberalization of sexual mores, opposition to contraception,

disapproval of gambling, hostility towards homosexuality, condemnation of evolutionary

teachings, and denunciation of abortion.

- The North Dakota Republican Party supports teaching about the true risks regarding pre-marital sexual activity for both men and women.[62]
- We oppose sale and use of the dangerous "Morning After Pill".[63]
- We oppose holding out the myth of "safe sex" to our teens as it is morally debasing and medically questionable.[64]
- We believe that gambling devastates the individual, the family and the community and therefore oppose any further gambling expansion in our state.[65]
- We believe that the scientific evidence supporting Intelligent Design and biblical creation should be included in the Oklahoma public school curricula, and where any evolution theory is taught, both should receive equal funding, time, and material.[66]
- We support a return to the policy of the United States military to exclude homosexuals as a matter of good order, morale, and discipline.[67]

Policy statements in opposition to traditional morality, or in support of a more

liberal view of morality, are coded as 604. Support for access to abortion service,

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[61] 2010 South Dakota Republican Party Platform.
[62] 2010 North Dakota Republican Party Platform.
[63] 2010 Texas Republican Party Platform.
[64] 2010 South Carolina Republican Party Platform.
[65] 2008 Nebraska Republican Party Platform.
[66] 2010 Oklahoma Republican Party Platform.
[67] 2008 Nebraska Republican Party Platform.

favorable references to stem-cell research, opposition to discrimination on the basis of

sexual orientation, support for comprehensive sexual education, and defense of full

contraception access fall into this category:

- We support a democratic government that…extends to gay and lesbian couples and their families all the same legal and social rights and protections that heterosexual couples now receive, including civil marriage.[68]
- We believe that a woman's decisions regarding pregnancy should be her own choice and not that of the government.[69]
- The South Carolina Democratic Party calls upon the U.S. Federal Government to permit and generously fund stem cell research.[70]

Policy references to internal security and law enforcement are included in this

policy domain as well, and statements regarding the judicial system and prison policies

are common across party platforms. While calls for increased enforcement of laws and

the tightening of legal loopholes dominates the law and order discussion, some state

party platforms also include references to easing punishments or focusing on

prevention, rather than punishment:

- (We) believe repeat sexual offenders, particularly those whose victims were children, should be sentenced to life in prison without the possibility of parole.[71]
- We support tougher prison sentences for identity theft, auto theft, burglary and forgery.[72]
- Supports the adoption of a no retreat law.[73]
- Reduce prison overcrowding and the drain on our economy by decreasing penalties for minor drug offenses and other victimless crimes, making the punishment fit the crime.[74]

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[68] 2010 Maine Democratic Party Platform.
[69] 2008 North Carolina Democratic Party Platform.
[70] 2010 South Carolina Democratic Party Platform.
[71] 2010 Arizona Republican Party Platform.
[72] 2010 Oregon Republican Party Platform.
[73] 2010 Wyoming Republican Party Platform.
[74] 2010 California Democratic Party Platform.

Social Groups

Finally, codes 701 through 706 are reserved for policies related to social groups, including organized labor, farmers, the disabled, and the elderly. Policy statements supporting the rights of workers to organize, calls for improved treatments of workers, and positive references to pensions are coded as 701. For example, "We support the extension of bargaining rights with binding arbitration to all employees, public and private."[75] Statements opposing collective bargaining rights, opposition to pension plans, and support for right to work legislation are coded as 702 and include policy statements like, "We oppose collective bargaining for public employees in order that essential services are not interrupted"[76] and "The Arizona Republican Party... supports state and national Right to Work legislation."[77] References to farmers and agriculture policy receive a code of 703, "We support those actions that would ensure the safety and protection of Montana's agriculture from predators, rodents, and wolves."[78]

Unfortunately, not all quasi-sentences fit neatly into the 56 category coding scheme. The reliability of the data analysis depends heavily upon the accuracy of the coding and it is essential that the platforms have low numbers of uncoded quasi-sentences, especially in the shortest platforms (Budge, et al 2001; Kligemann, et al 2006). Fortunately, in this sample only about 2 percent of quasi-sentences received a code of "000" indicating that either the quasi-sentence addressed a policy area not

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[75] 2010 Idaho Democratic Party Platform.
[76] 2008 West Virginia Republican Party Platform.
[77] 2010 Arizona Republican Party Platform.
[78] 2010 Montana Republican Party Platform.

covered by the coding scheme, or that the quasi-sentence did not contain any relevant policy.

Overview of Party Platform Issue Content

Platform length and ideology can tell us a great deal about party platforms, but neither can replace an analysis of actual issue content. While chapters 5 and 6 will address issue content in more detail, I would like to provide a brief overview of platform content for the national and state party platforms used in this analysis. Figure 1 displays the average proportion of coding units dedicated to each policy domain for Democratic and Republican party platforms, at the state and national levels.

Democratic State Party

5%
12%
6%
15%
33%
13%
16%

Republican State Party

5%
5%
15%
9%
22%
16%
28%

Democratic National

23%
6%
14%
15%
15%
16%
11%

Republican National Party

17%
3%
13%
19%
9%
21%
18%

- ■ External Relations
- ■ Freedom & Democracy
- ■ Political System
- ■ Economy
- ■ Welfare & Quality of Life
- ■ Fabric of Society
- ■ Social Groups
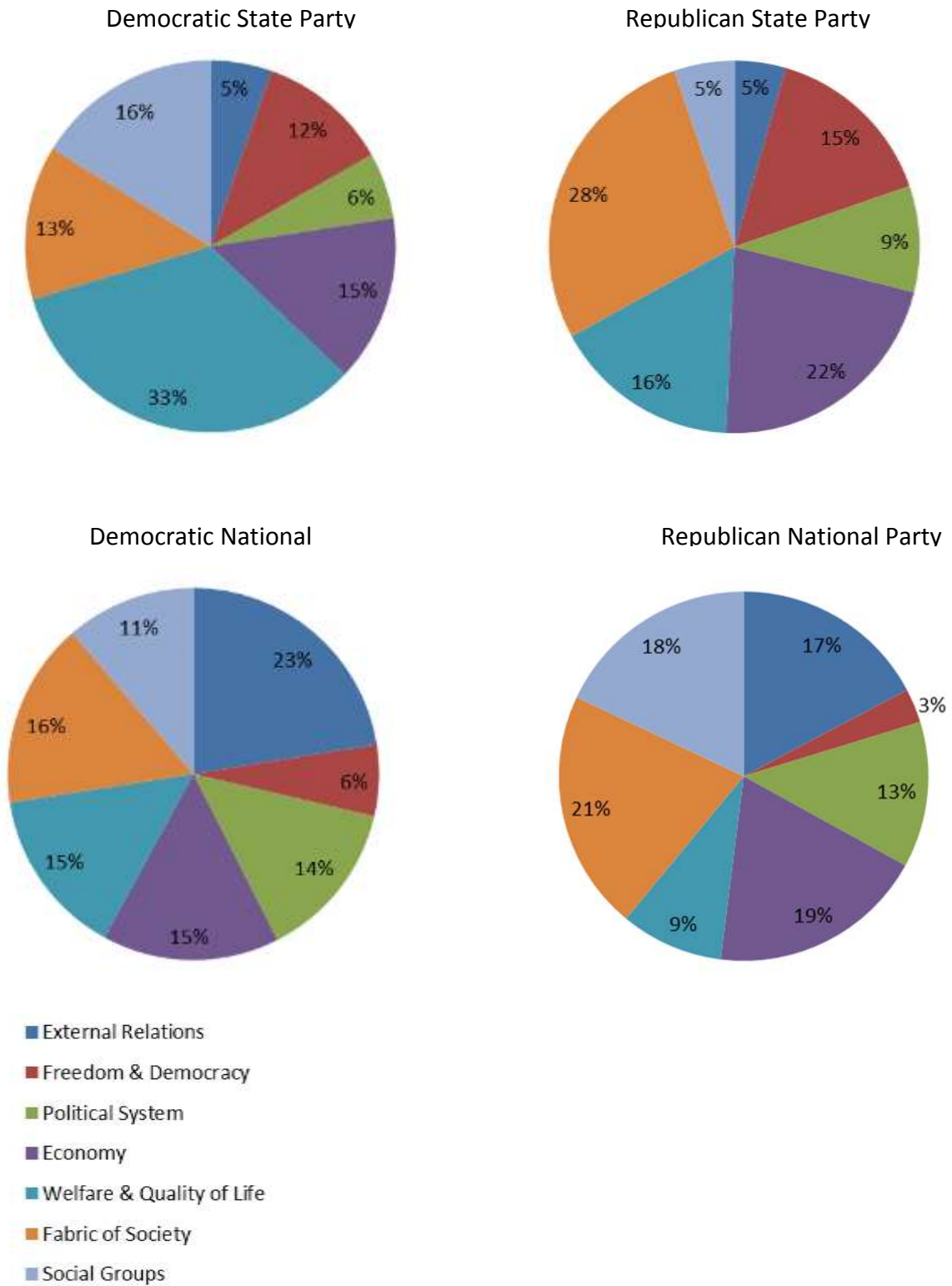
Figure 1: Proportion of State and National Party Platforms Dedicated to Policy Domains, by Party, 2008-2010

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External Relations

Approximately a quarter of the national Democratic Party platform is dedicated to issues of external relations, including issues of war and diplomacy (Figure 1). Although the national Republican Party platform dedicated a slightly smaller proportion of its platform to external relations, nearly of fifth of the platform addressed these issues. On average, state party platforms dedicated just 5 percent of coding units to issues of external relations. While a lesser focus on external relations is expected at the state level, it is interesting to note that the proportional focus was identical for Democratic and Republican state party platforms.

Looking deeper, although Democratic and Republican state party platforms dedicated the same proportion of their platforms to external relations, their focus was different (Figure 2). Nearly 40 percent of Democratic state party platform mentions of external relations were positive mentions of internationalism (107), while Republican state party platforms dedicated 60 percent of their external relations mentions to positive mentions of the military (104). Despite the similar proportions of the party platforms focusing on external relations, Democratic and Republican platforms emphasized distinct policies. Nationally and at the state level, Democrats prefer to embrace internationalism and promote diplomacy, while Republican prefer to stress America's military capabilities.
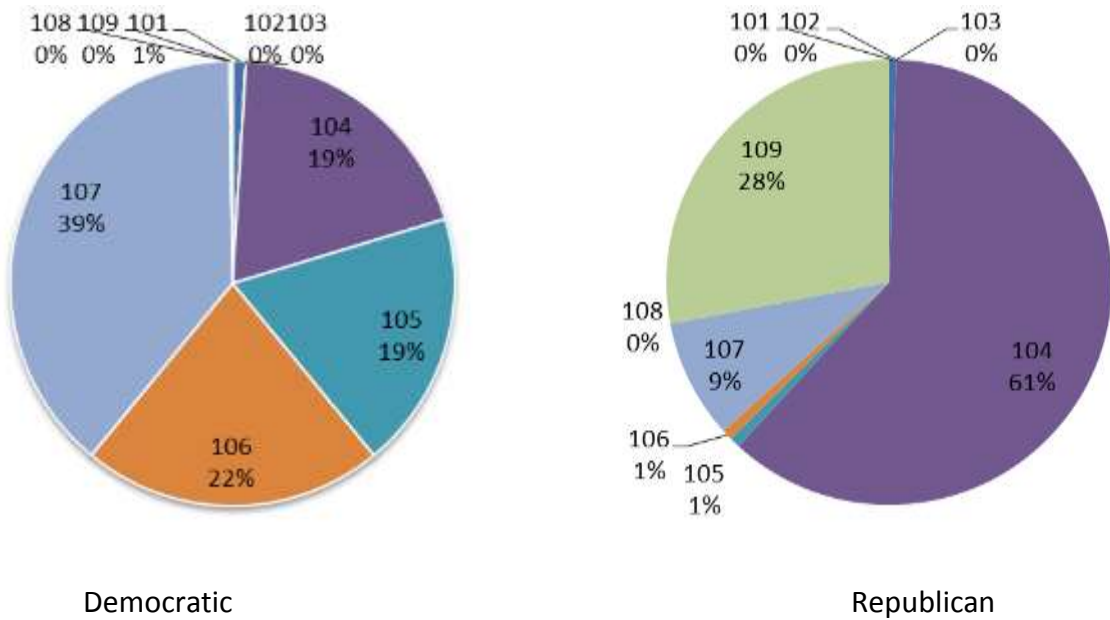
Democratic   Republican

Freedom and Democracy

Only a very small portion of the national platforms addressed issues of freedom and democracy, with little difference between the parties. State party platforms focused on these issues significantly more than the national parties, but no significant party differences exist at the state level either (Figure 3). The bi-partisan consistency remains intact when we examine subcategories; both Democratic and Republican state parties dedicate a majority of their policy statements to direct mentions of democracy (202).
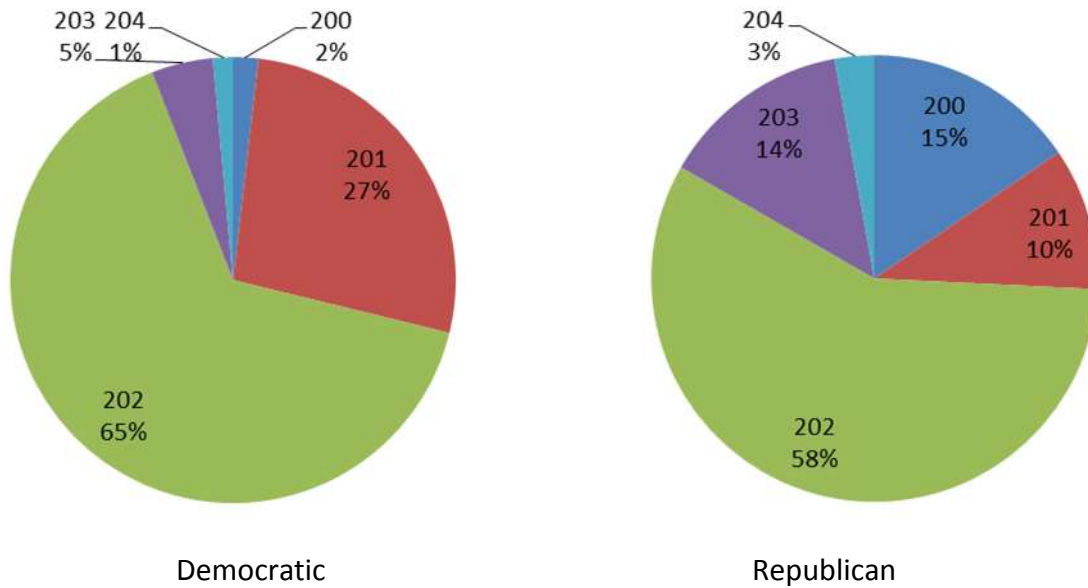
Figure 3: Proportion of State Party Platforms Devoted to Freedom and Democracy Policy Domain

Political System

Approximately 15 percent of each national party platform is dedicated to political system issues, compared with less than 10 percent of state party platforms. Again, there does not appear to be significant partisan differences with regard to focus on this policy domain at either level. Examining the subcategories where the state parties focused does indicate significant partisan differences (Figure 4). A majority of political system mentions in Democratic state party platforms were mentions of political authority (305), while a majority of Republican state party platform mentions focused on federalism and states' rights (301).

Democratic   Republican
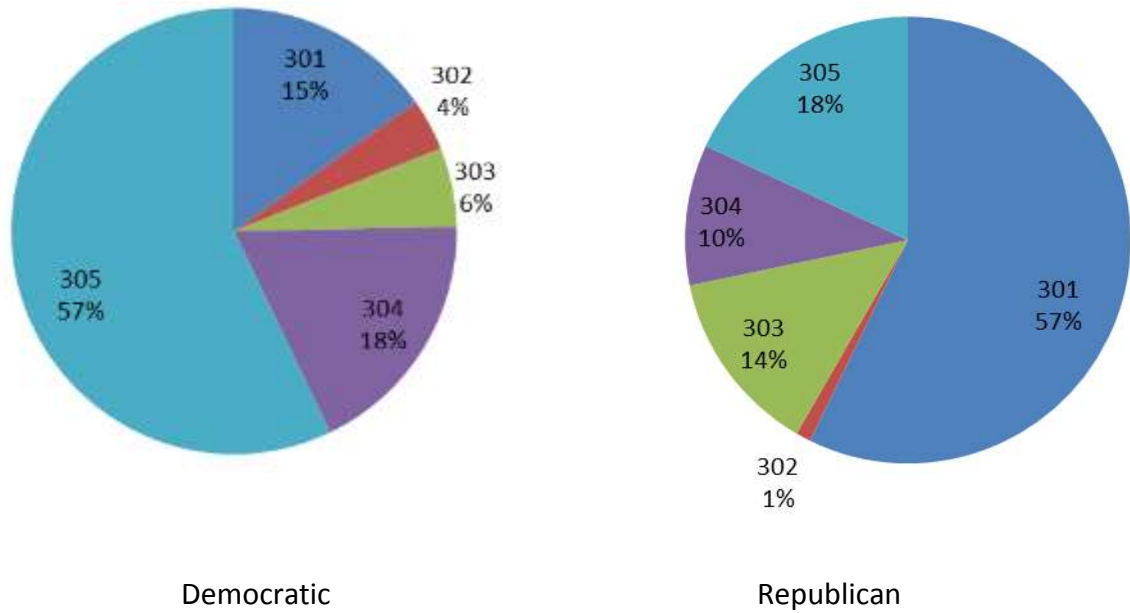
Figure 4: Proportion of State Party Platforms Devoted to Political System Policy Domain

Economy

Although the economy was the issue most salient to voters in the 2008 election, economic concerns accounted for a relatively modest portion of platforms in both parties. The national Democratic Party platform dedicated 15 percent of the content to economic issues, a proportion half of the average Democratic state party platform (Figure 1). The national Republican Party dedicated approximately one-fifth of their platform to economic issues, again equivalent to half the average proportion in their state party counterparts. Although the key economic issues facing the United States are national economic issues, states emphasized the economy more. This may be because while the states have limited control on national economic policy, they often endure the brunt of the consequences. States have primary responsibility for caring for the indigent and coordinating services for the unemployed, and found their already-tight budgets strained even more.

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Again, viewing only the aggregate patterns obscures real partisan differences (Figure 5). Nearly half of economic policy mentions in Democratic state party platforms reference support for market regulation (403) and infrastructure (411). Alternatively, nearly a third of economic references in Republican state party platforms focus on free market ideals (401). Although state Democratic and Republican party platforms dedicate similar portions of their platforms to the economy, careful analysis of platform content demonstrates how differently the state parties view the economic situation and the policy maneuvers they believe will remedy the situation.

Democratic   Republican
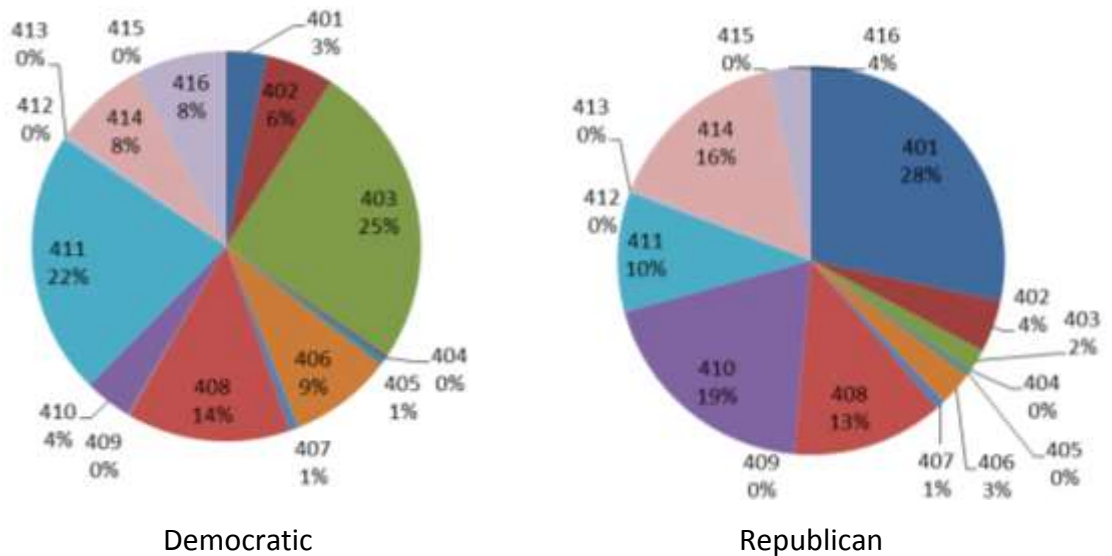
Figure 5: Proportion of State Party Platforms Devoted to Economic Policy Domain

Welfare and Quality of Life

Issues of welfare and quality of life accounted for 15 and 9 percent of the Democratic and Republican national party platforms, respectively (Figure 1). Although the difference between the parties is relatively modest, the greater focus on these issues within the Democratic platform is as expected. This pattern is more intense at the state level. In state party platforms, Democratic platforms dedicated twice the proportion of their content to issues of welfare and

quality of life than their Republican counterparts (Democratic

Republican

Figure 6). Not only do Democrats at the state level differ in how much emphasis

they dedicate to social welfare issues, when these issues are discussed, the parties focus

on very different topics. State Democratic parties focus heavily on environmental

protection issues (33 percent of all social welfare mentions) while state Republican

Parties dedicate 60 percent of their social welfare discussions to negative mentions of

the welfare state (505) and calls for educational expansion (506).

Democratic   Republican
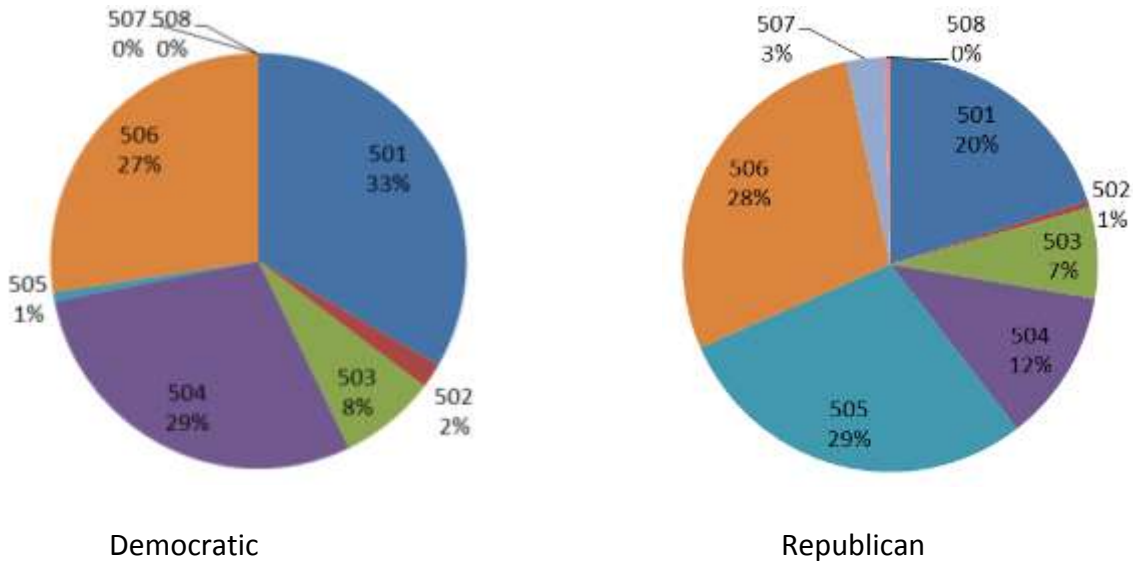
Figure 6: Proportion of State Party Platforms Devoted to Welfare and Quality of Life Policy Domain

Fabric of Society

Fabric of society issues account for 15 and 20 percent of Democratic and

Republican national party platforms, respectively (Figure 1). While these are modest

differences, they adhere to the expectation that Republicans would attach more

importance to these issues. As with the previous issue category, at the state level the

partisan differences are more dramatic. More than twice the proportion of coding units

in Republican state party platforms are dedicated to fabric of society issues than in

Democratic state party platforms (Democratic

Republican

Figure 7). Republican state party platforms focus their attentions heavily on

support for traditional morality; nearly 50 percent of statements in the fabric of society

policy domain fall into category 603. Democratic state party platform divide their fabric

of society policy mentions between two key categories – negative mentions of

traditional morality (604) and law and order issues (605).Together, these account for

nearly 60 percent of Democratic state platform mentions. While Republican state party

platforms dedicate nearly half of their mentions to traditional moral politics, the

Democratic state party platforms devote just over a quarter of their platform to

progressive morality positions. I will explore these patterns in more detail in chapters 5

and 6.

Democratic   Republican
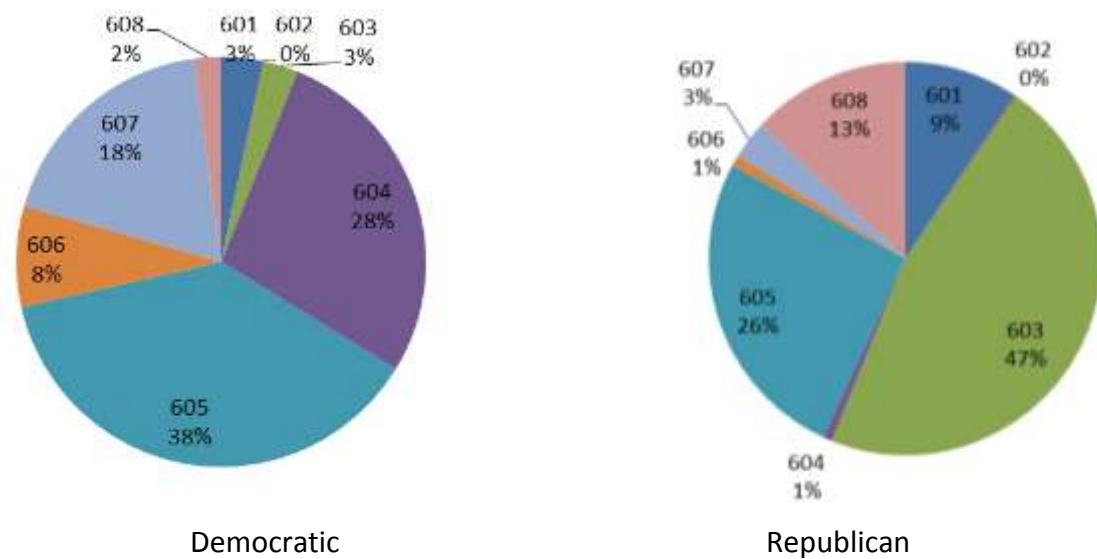
Figure 7: Proportion of State Party Platforms Devoted to Fabric of Society Policy Domain

Social Groups

Focus on social groups varies significantly at both levels. At the national level, Republicans devote significantly more attention to social groups than their Democratic counterparts (18 to 11 percent, respectively). However, at the state level, this pattern is reversed. The difference between the Republican and Democratic state party platforms' focus on social groups is dramatic (an 11 percent difference), but here Democrats lead the way (Figure 8). At the state level, both Democratic and Republican platforms focus heavily on positive mentions of labor groups and the working class (701), dedicating 48 percent and 24 percent, respectively, of their social group mentions to this category. Republican state party platforms also demonstrate a real concern for farmers and agricultural policy, focusing a third of their social group mentions here (703).

Democratic   Republican
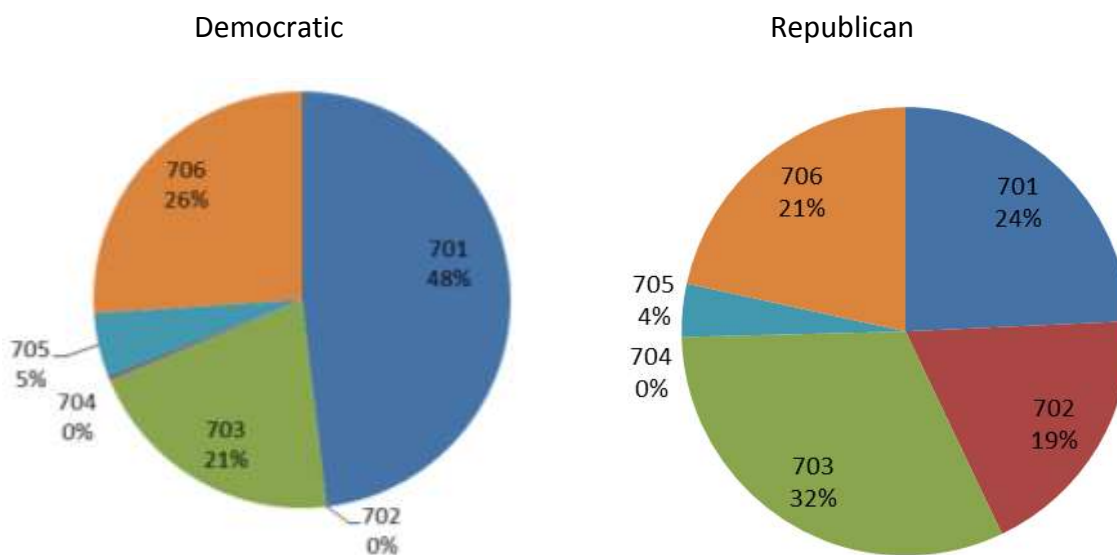
Figure 8: Proportion of State Party Platforms Devoted to Social Groups Policy Domain

Conclusion

From the discussion above we can see that there are significant differences in the types of policies Democrats and Republicans prefer to focus on. While this is not

unexpected, the dramatic differences between the behaviors of state parties and their national counterparts highlight divergent sets of priorities. While Democrats focused more on social welfare issues than Republicans at both levels, state party platforms indicate these issues are more salient at the state level. Democratic and Republican state party platforms devote the same proportion of space to the external relations policy domain, yet they focus on wildly different issues.

Among other things, these findings highlight the independence of state political parties and the limited influence of the national parties. While the national parties seek to craft a party image, the successes of these endeavors remain highly dependent upon the willingness of the state parties to fall in line. Perhaps more interesting, the state parties vary dramatically from one another. The next two chapters are dedicated to sharing the striking variation of parties in our imagined two-party system.

CHAPTER 4
DESCRIPTION OF STATE PARTY PLATFORMS

Describing State Party Platforms

First, I begin with the simplest of descriptions, the length of state party

platforms. Platform length is important because state parties that address many issues

or discuss issues in greater depth will require more space. Alternatively, some state

parties put out only brief platforms, addressing only a few issues with minimal details on

policy preferences. Platform length can tell us something about platform complexity and

a party's views on the proper role of government.

Nationally, Republican rhetoric and conservative ideology are generally

accompanied by a professed preference for smaller government and fewer

governmental regulations. If a state party prefers limited government, the platform is

expected to address fewer policy positions and require less length. As such, I

hypothesize that Republican state party platforms will be shorter than Democratic state

party platforms (Hypothesis 4.1).

- Hypothesis 4.1: Republican state party platforms will be shorter than
  Democratic state party platforms.

In addition, the tradition of states' rights and independence are strong forces in

the American south and western states. These traditions emphasize decentralized

power and often are accompanied by a general desire for less governmental control.

Therefore, I expect state party platforms in these regions to be shorter than the

platforms in the northeast and Midwest (Hypothesis 4.2).

- Hypothesis 4.2: State party platforms in the south and west will be shorter than state party platforms in the northeast and Midwest.

Results: Platform Length

A cursory examination of platforms indicates that both national party platforms are longer than any state party platform, but state party platform lengths vary greatly. On average, state party platforms are 4,500 words in length, with a median word count of 2,830 (Table 3). Parties differed significantly in platform length, and as expected, state Republican parties tend towards shorter state party platforms than their Democratic counterparts (Figure 9). Colorado Democrats produced the longest state party platform at 23,046 words in length, compared to the shortest platform from Florida Republicans at only 214 words in length.[79] The mean length of state Republican platforms is 3,867, compared to the 5,237 words for state Democratic platforms.

	Word Count			Coding Units		
	Democratic	*Republican*	*All*	*Democratic*	*Republican*	*All*
Mean	5,237	3,867	4,501	265	174	216
Median	2,701	2,945	2,830	163	124	158
Minimum	380	214	214	19	14	14
Maximum	23,046	16,142	23,046	1,016	777	1,016
Standard Deviation	5,932	3,508	4,832	266	165	221
National Platform	32,418	23,549	- - -	1,098	1,007	- - -

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics of State and National Party Platforms

The mean word counts only tell us part of the story. When we compare the median lengths of the state party platforms, the partisan differences fade rapidly. The median length of state Democratic platforms is 2,701 words- 250 words less than the median Republican state platform. However, the state party platforms falling above the median word count are split nearly evenly between Democratic and Republican

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[79] The full text of the Florida Republican Party platform is included in Appendix C.

platforms (45 percent to 55 percent, respectively). Platforms falling at the extreme ends

of the spectrum significantly skew interpretations based on mean length.
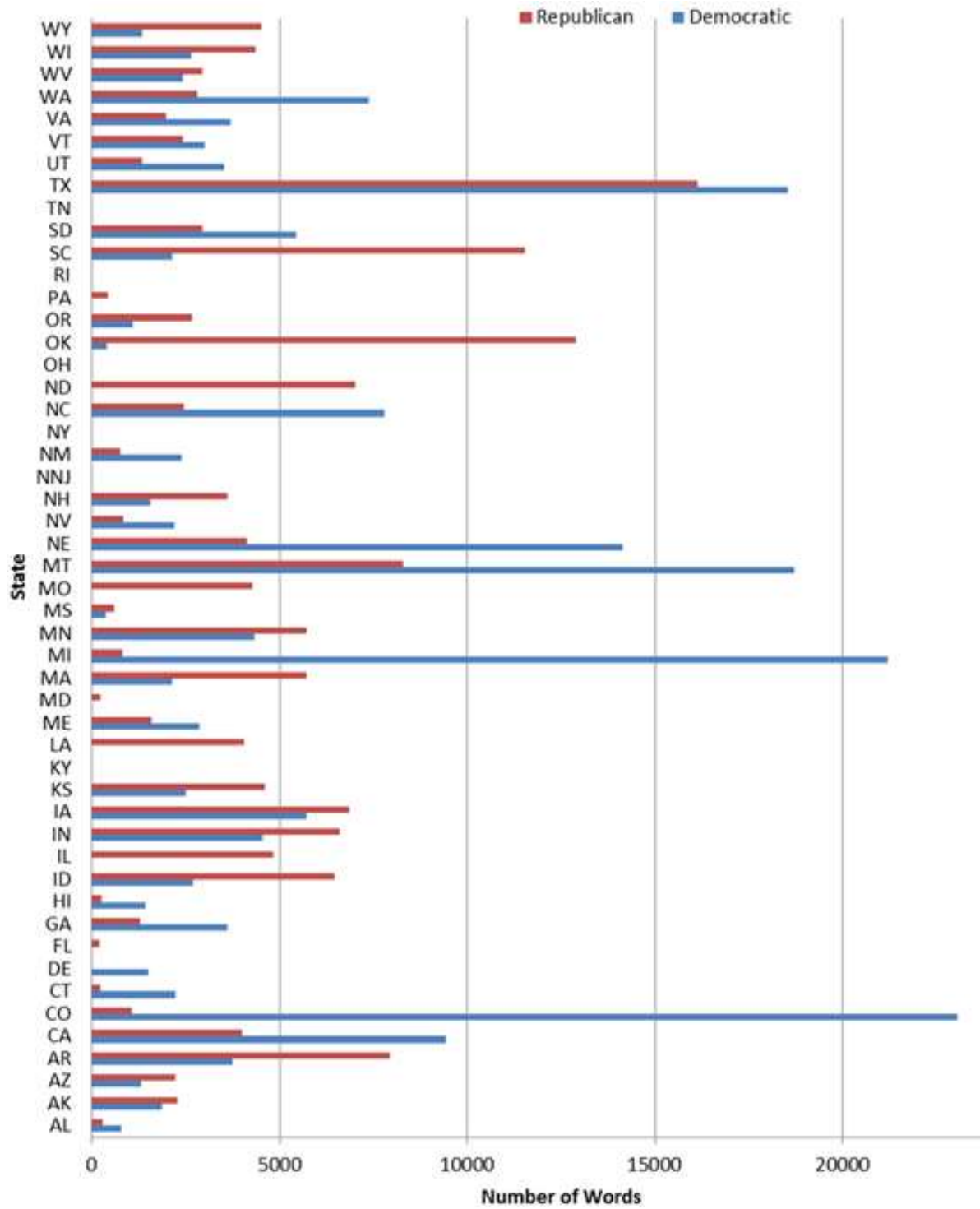
Figure 9: Length of State Party Platforms, Word Count

Simply looking at word counts overstates the differences between the parties to some extent and writing styles can significantly impact word counts, even if the substantive content does not change (Figure 10). Some state party platforms rely heavily on bullet lists, while others prefer to write out full paragraphs. Some platforms are written succinctly, while others are less concerned with brevity. North Dakota Republicans, for example, preface each policy statement with a series of statements supporting their reasoning. To examine the impact of writing styles on platform length, we can look at the number of coding units present in each platform (Table 3).[80] Each separate policy position statement constitutes a separate coding unit, regardless of the number of words used. This means that a gay marriage statement like, "We oppose the Defense of Marriage Act"[81] accounts for the same number of coding units as, "(We support) Missouri's constitutional amendment… clearly stating that only marriages between one man and one woman will be valid and recognized."[82]

State party platforms have a mean of 216 coding units, with Florida and Maryland Republicans having the fewest and Colorado Democrats having the most (Figure 10). Consistent with the word count measure and hypothesis 4.1, Republican state party platforms generally contain fewer coding units than Democratic state party platforms. However, this tendency should not be overstated; sixteen of the 40 party platforms with the fewest coding units are Democratic platforms.

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[80] A coding unit in this study is a quasi-sentence – a sentence or phrase addressing a single policy area. Coding procedures and policy categories are discussed in detail in chapter 3.
[81] 2010 Iowa Democratic State Party Platform.
[82] 2008 Missouri Republican State Party Platform.
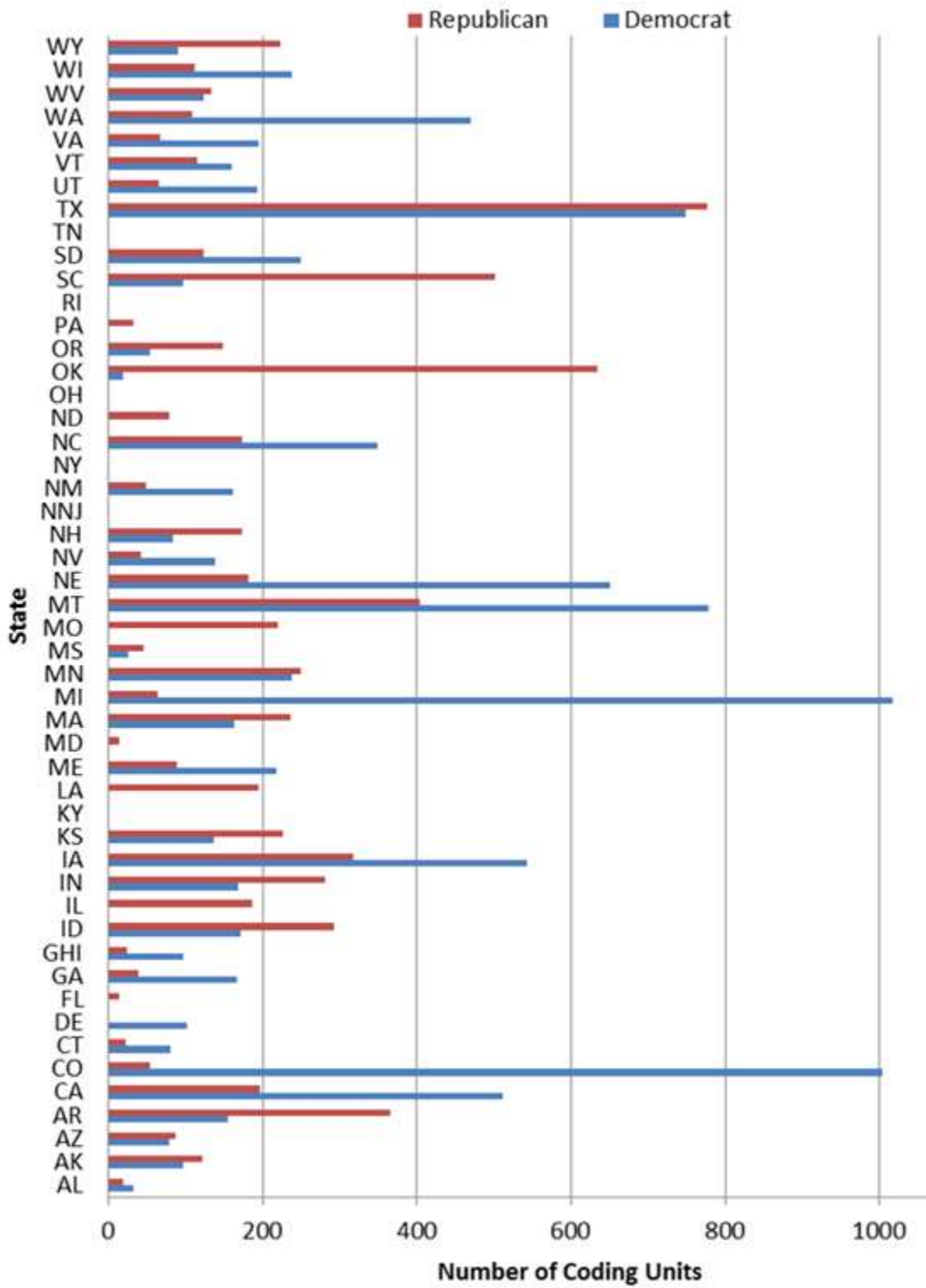
Figure 10: State Party Platform Length, Coding Units

Further investigation makes clear that partisanship is only one factor contributing to platform length. To understand fully state party platform length patterns, we must consider regional patterns. States are categorized by region using the four basic US Census regions – Northeast, South, Midwest, and West (Table 4). The conservative tendencies of the American South and west, and the generalized preference for small government suggests that state party platforms in these regions would be shorter than platforms from the Northeast or Midwest. Hypothesis 4.2 is supported only in part. As predicted, state party platforms from western states tend to use fewer words than average; 66 percent fall below the median (Table 5).[83] However, contrary to hypothesis 4.2, state party platforms from the South are not particularly concise. State party platforms from southern states are evenly distributed around the median. While southern political culture emphasizes state control and small government the South also has a long and colorful history in big government behavior. The American South has used substantial government presence in the lives of individuals to enforce a variety of social regulations including slavery, racial segregation, and contemporary morality policies.

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[83] If we examine length by region using the number of coding units, rather than word counts, the results are comparable; western state party platforms are shorter and Midwestern platforms are longer.

States	RegionC	RegionB
Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Vermont	New England	Northeast
New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania	Mid-Atlantic	
Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Maryland, North Carolina, South Carolina, Virginia, West Virginia	South Atlantic	South
Alabama, Kentucky, Mississippi, Tennessee	East South Central	
Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, Texas	West South Central	
Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, Ohio, Wisconsin	East North Central	Midwest
Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota	West North Central	
Arizona, Colorado, Idaho, New Mexico, Montana, Utah, Nevada, Wyoming	Mountain	West
Alaska, California, Hawaii, Oregon, Washington	Pacific	

Source: US Census Bureau http://www.census.gov/geo/www/us_regdiv.pdf

Table 4 States by US Census Regions

	Northeast	South	Midwest	West
Longest Quartile	8% (1)	26% (6)	37% (7)	23% (6)
Second Quartile	25% (3)	22% (5)	47% (9)	12% (3)
Third Quartile	50% (6)	17% (4)	11% (2)	31% (8)
Shortest Quartile	17% (2)	35% (8)	5% (1)	35% (9)
	100% (12)	100% (23)	100% (19)	100% (26)

Chi-Squared: 18.84, p<.027

Table 5 State Party Platforms, by Length and Region

Expectations for State Party Platform Ideology

Existing studies on party platforms focus almost exclusively on the ideological positioning of platforms and, while not sufficient, this is an ideal place to begin. The national Democratic Party generally reflects more liberal policy positions. Therefore, I expect Democratic state party platforms to include significantly more liberal policy preferences than Republican state party platforms, and Republican state party

platforms to contain significantly more conservative policy preferences than Democratic

state party platforms (Hypothesis 4.3).

- Hypothesis 4.3: Democratic state party platforms will be significantly more liberal than Republican state party platforms and Republican state party platforms will be significantly more conservative than Democratic state party platforms.

The coalitions supporting the Democratic Party tend to be more varied.

Democratic support is highest in urban areas where demographic diversity is high, and

along the coasts. In addition, the Democratic Party has a long history of incorporating

conservative factions, even when the conservative members may appear to be suited

better for a Republican identity. All of these observations lead to the expectation that

there will be significantly more ideological diversity in Democratic state party platforms

than in Republican state party platforms (Hypothesis 4.4).

- Hypothesis 4.4: There will be significantly more ideological diversity in Democratic state party platforms than in Republican state party platforms.

Partisan affiliation is not the only factor I expect to influence the ideology of

state party platforms. The US states vary widely on an assortment of measures including

ideological temperaments. It is easy to recognize that Massachusetts is more liberal

than Utah, and that Mississippi leans further to the right than Oregon. In states with

clear ideological leanings, state party platforms should reflect these patters. In states

where the median voter is further to the right, I expect more conservative state party

platforms from both parties (Hypothesis 4.5). Alternatively, in more liberal states, I

expect more liberal platforms, regardless of party (Hypothesis 4.6). The reasons for

these expectations are simple and intuitive. In a conservative state, like Utah, the

median voter is positioned further to the right than the median voter of a more liberal

state like Massachusetts. As such, in order for the Democratic Party of Utah to remain

viable, they must avoid alienating too large of a segment of the electorate. I anticipate

this desire to remain electorally viable to incentivize state platform committees to

develop platforms which reflect the preferences of the state population more

accurately.

- Hypothesis 4.5: State party platforms in conservative states will be significantly more conservative than in liberal states, regardless of party.
- Hypothesis 4.6: State party platforms in liberal states will be significantly liberal than in conservative states, regardless of party.

The competitive environment of a state is expected to influence the ideological

positions of state party platforms as well. I hypothesize that state party platforms in

more competitive states will be significantly closer in ideology to the national party

platforms than in less competitive states (Hypothesis 4.7). In less competitive states, the

parties have the freedom and incentive to more freely move across the ideological

spectrum in response to local conditions. The majority party is politically safe and can

spend less time softening their statements. The minority party begins with a

disadvantage and risks little by rebelling from the national standard.

- Hypothesis 4.7: State party platforms in more competitive states will be significantly closer in ideology to the national party platforms that in less competitive states.

Measuring State Party Platform Ideology

I employ two methods of calculating right-left ideological measures. The first is

the standard CMP RILE additive index that is used extensively in comparative political

research (Budge, et al. 1986; Budge 1987; 2001; Klingemann, et al. 1994; 2006; Laver

and Budge 1992; Laver, et al. 2003; Laver 2000; 2001, for example). This measure is

calculated by adding the proportions of all of the conservative policy position categories

and subtracting from this the proportions of all of the liberal policy categories. This raw

measure is then scaled for interpretation. Table 6 provides a list of the issues deemed

conservative and liberal in the CMP RILE measure. The final scaled measure ranges from

2.78 to 7.93, from most liberal to most conservative.

- CMP RILE = ∑ (conservative) - ∑ (liberal)
- RILE Scale = (CMP RILE + 100) / 20

The state party platforms are ranked by their CMP ideology score in Table 7. It is

clear that most state party platforms conform to the ideological patterns expected.

Consistent with hypothesis 4.3, the Democratic state party platforms are generally more

liberal than Republican platforms. Moreover, Republican state party platforms are more

conservative than Democratic state party platforms, consistent with hypothesis 4.4.

A scatterplot of scaled CMP ideology scores for the states is shown in Figure 11.

The most interesting points in this simple scatterplot are where the state party

platforms do not fit neatly into the expected pattern. The Massachusetts Republican

platform, for example, has a scaled CMP ideology score of 4.56 – more liberal than ten

Democratic state party platforms and the Arizona Democratic Party platform has a

scaled CMP score of 5.38 – more conservative than three Republican state party

platforms. Moreover, simply by observing the ideological ranges of state party platforms

using the scaled CMP measure, we see that Republican state party platforms have a

greater range – 3.37 versus 2.60 points, contradicting hypothesis 4.5.

		CMP RILE Method	Franzmann & Kaiser Method
	DOMAIN 1: External Relations		
101	*Foreign Special Relationships: Positive*	- - -	Valence
102	*Foreign Special Relationships: Negative*	- - -	Valence
103	*Anti-Imperialism*	Liberal	Valence
104	*Military: Positive*	Conservative	Conservative
105	*Military: Negative*	Liberal	Liberal
106	*Peace*	Liberal	Liberal
107	*Internationalism: Positive*	Liberal	Liberal
109	*Internationalism: Negative*	- - -	Conservative
	DOMAIN 2: Freedom and Democracy		
200	*Libertarianism*	- - -	Conservative
201	*Freedom and Human Rights*	Conservative	Valence
202	*Democracy*	Liberal	Valence
203	*Constitutionalism: Positive*	Conservative	Conservative
204	*Constitutionalism: Negative*	- - -	Valence
	DOMAIN 3: Political System		
301	*Federalism/States' Rights*	- - -	Conservative
302	*Centralisation*	- - -	Valence
303	*Governmental and Administrative Efficiency*	- - -	Conservative
304	*Political Corruption*	- - -	Valence
305	*Political Authority*	Conservative	Valence
	DOMAIN 4: Economy		
401	*Free Market Economy*	Conservative	Conservative
402	*Incentives*	Conservative	Valence
403	*Market Regulation*	Liberal	Liberal
404	*Economic Planning*	Liberal	Valence
405	*Corporatism/ Mixed Economy*	- - -	Valence
406	*Protectionism: Positive*	Liberal	Valence
407	*Protectionism: Negative*	Conservative	Valence
408	*Economic Goals*	- - -	Valence
409	*Keynesian Demand Management*	- - -	Valence
410	*Economic Growth*	- - -	Conservative
411	*Technology and Infrastructure*	- - -	Liberal
412	*Controlled Economy*	Liberal	Valence
413	*Nationalisation*	Liberal	Valence
414	*Economic Orthodoxy*	Conservative	Conservative
415	*Marxist Analysis*	- - -	Valence
416	*Sustainability*	- - -	Liberal

Table 6: Ideology of Coding Categories

		CMP	Franzmann & Kaiser Method
(Continued)			
	DOMAIN 5: Welfare and Quality of Life		
501	*Environmental Protection*	- - -	Liberal
502	*Culture*	- - -	Liberal
503	*Equality*	- - -	Liberal
504	*Welfare State: Positive*	Liberal	Liberal
505	*Welfare State: Negative*	Conservative	Conservative
506	*Education Expansion*	Liberal	Liberal
507	*Education Limitation*	- - -	Conservative
508	*The Myth of Global Warming*	- - -	Conservative
	DOMAIN 6: Fabric of Society		
601	*National Way of life: Positive*	Conservative	Conservative
602	*National Way of life: Negative*	- - -	Valence
603	*Traditional Morality: Positive*	Conservative	Conservative
604	*Traditional Morality: Negative*	- - -	Liberal
605	*Law and Order*	Conservative	Conservative
606	*Civic Mindedness*	Conservative	Liberal
607	*Multiculturalism: Positive*	- - -	Liberal
608	*Multiculturalism: Negative*	- - -	Conservative
	DOMAIN 7: Social Groups		
701	*Labour Groups: Positive*	Liberal	Liberal
702	*Labour Groups: Negative*	- - -	Conservative
703	*Agriculture and Farmers: Positive*	- - -	Liberal
704	*Middle Class and Professional Groups*	- - -	Valence
705	*Underprivileged Minority Groups*	- - -	Liberal
706	*Non-economic Demographic Groups*	- - -	Liberal

Table 6: Ideology of Coding Categories

In addition the traditional CMP measure, I include a second measure of state platform ideology. While the CMP ideology measure provides a simple and intuitive estimate and is widely used in comparative political research, it is, in some respects, flawed. One potential problem with the CMP measure is that it assumes a static issue environment where the ideological bend of issues does not fluctuate over time. The labeling of categories as conservative and liberal stems from an analysis of western European parties in the late 1990s, and there are legitimate concerns about the applicability of this categorization to American state political parties in 2008. The

development of this measure and its rigid assumptions pose significant validity

concerns. More importantly, the CMP measure fails to account for the presence of

valence issues in the issue environment. Taking these concerns into account, I include

the ideology of American state party platforms using Franzmann and Kaiser's (2006)

measure, which provides a floating ideology measure that allows for variation between

elections and directly addresses valence issues. This is the ideology measure of state

party platforms that I will use for the duration of this study. To identify the ideological

leaning of issue areas, each coding category is regressed with the dummy party variable;

where partisanship fails to reach statistical significance we have valance issues. These

issues are ignored in the CMP measure, but even without a significant ideological bend

these issues may be politically salient. Where partisanship is statistically significant, a

positive coefficient indicates a liberal issue and a negative coefficient indicates a

conservative issue. Larger beta coefficients in the dummy regressions indicate more

ideologically charged issues. The issues falling into each ideological category are

displayed in Table 7.

In order to calculate the ideological position of the state party platforms, the

proportions of all conservative, liberal, and valence issue categories are summed into

separate variables. Once a raw measure is calculated it is scaled for analysis on a -10 to

+10 scale. This final scaled ideology measure for all state party platforms ranges from -

7.36 to 8.08 from most liberal to most conservative.

- Ideology = [∑ (conservative) - ∑ (liberal)] / [∑ (conservative) + ∑ (liberal) + ∑ (valence)]
- Ideology Scale = Ideology * 10
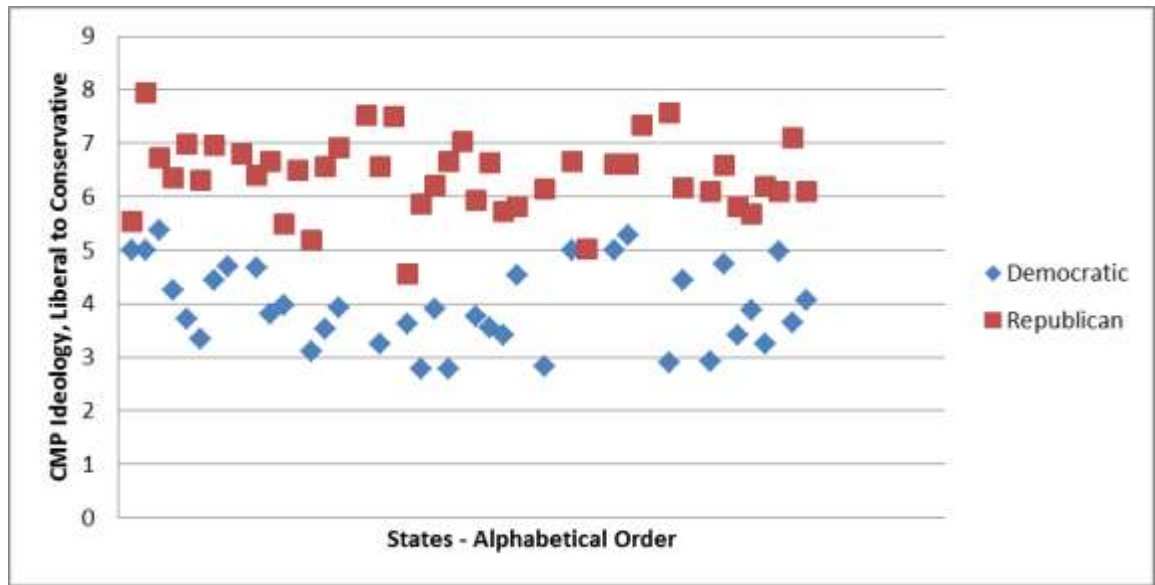
Figure 11 CMP Ideology Scaled, by State
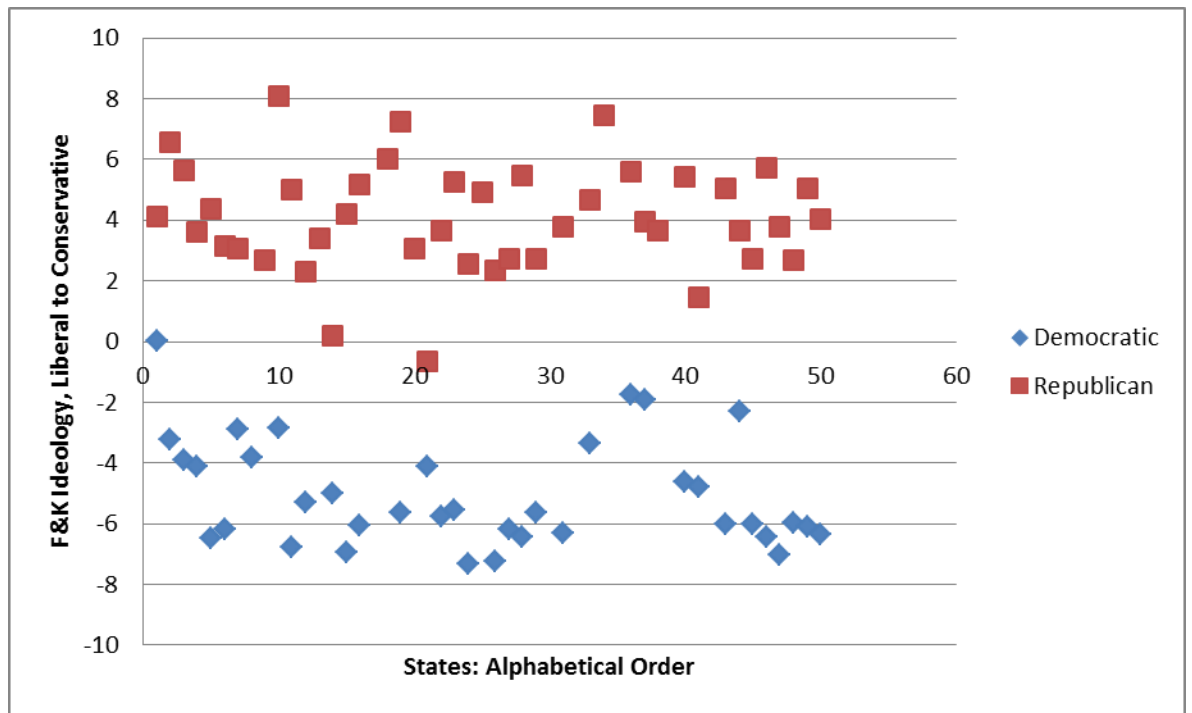
Figure 12: Franzmann and Kaiser Ideology Scaled, by State

Using the Franzmann and Kaiser (2006) ideology measure in place of the CMP

measure, the ranking of individual state party platforms change significantly, although

the general pattern remains the same (Figure 12). Consistent with hypotheses 4.3 and

4.4, Democratic Party platforms generally are more liberal and Republican Party

platforms more conservative. In addition, the Franzmann and Kaiser (2006) results also show a greater degree of polarization between Democratic and Republican state party platforms (Figure 12). Now there are only a few cases of ideological overlapping between state parties – the Alabama Democrats are unusually conservative, and the Massachusetts and Indiana Republicans are abnormally liberal (Table 7).

Despite the changes seen when we shift from the traditional, yet flawed, CMP measure , the ideological range of Republican state party platforms remains higher than the ideological range of Democratic platforms, inconsistent with hypothesis 4.5. The greater diversity of Democratic constituencies led to the expectation that Democratic state party platforms would show a greater degree of ideological diversity. However, regardless of the ideological measure used, Republican state party platforms show a greater ideological range. Given that 2008 was a general election year that favored the Democratic Party at the national level, and the partisan winds shifted to favor the Republicans in 2010, it could be that the ideological diversity among Democratic and Republican platforms was an artifact of the election cycles. However, in this analysis, the platform year proved to be statistically insignificant. Additional research will be needed to uncover reasons for these relationships and confirm these patterns hold over time.

At the national level, the Republican Party appears to be operating a "small-tent" organization. This perception of the Republican Party as reluctant to diversify has resulted in dramatic claims of an impending Republican demise. These cries became louder following the 2008 November elections. Yet, despite the limited constituency groups, Republicans control a majority of state legislatures and a majority of governors'

mansions. This degree of political success in the states may be due, in some part, to the independence of the state parties and their decision to prioritize local conditions over national ones.

It may be that while the national Republican Party is streamlining their message, the state Republican parties are branching out. This is not to suggest that the state Republican parties do not share common values or ideologies, but evidence does suggest that state Republican parties are compelled to pursue their own local interests. In part, this is unsurprising. State parties focus on electing state officials, rather than national candidates, but it is noteworthy that the state Republican parties often find success in distancing themselves from their counterparts in other states and at the national level. As you will see in the next chapter, the greater ideological diversity of state Republican parties is not the only way in which they contradict our expectations or challenge conventional wisdom.

Rank	State	Party	CMP Scaled	Rank	State	Party	Franzmann & Kaiser Scaled
1	Mississippi	Democrat	2.78	1	Mississippi	Democrat	-7.31
2	Michigan	Democrat	2.79	2	Montana	Democrat	-7.25
3	New Mexico	Democrat	2.83	3	Washington	Democrat	-7.04
4	South Carolina	Democrat	2.89	4	Iowa	Democrat	-6.95
5	Texas	Democrat	2.93	5	Hawaii	Democrat	-6.77
6	Indiana	Democrat	3.11	6	California	Democrat	-6.46
7	Washington	Democrat	3.24	7	Nevada	Democrat	-6.43
8	Maine	Democrat	3.25	8	Virginia	Democrat	-6.42
9	Colorado	Democrat	3.35	9	Wyoming	Democrat	-6.34
10	Nevada	Democrat	3.41	10	New Mexico	Democrat	-6.30
11	Vermont	Democrat	3.41	11	Colorado	Democrat	-6.20
12	Iowa	Democrat	3.53	12	Nebraska	Democrat	-6.17
13	Nebraska	Democrat	3.54	13	Wisconsin	Democrat	-6.08
14	Massachusetts	Democrat	3.62	14	Kansas	Democrat	-6.04
15	Wisconsin	Democrat	3.65	15	Texas	Democrat	-6.02
16	California	Democrat	3.72	16	Vermont	Democrat	-6.00
17	Montana	Democrat	3.77	17	West Virginia	Democrat	-5.95
18	Hawaii	Democrat	3.80	18	Michigan	Democrat	-5.76
19	Virginia	Democrat	3.87	19	New Hampshire	Democrat	-5.63
20	Minnesota	Democrat	3.91	20	Maine	Democrat	-5.63
21	Kansas	Democrat	3.93	21	Minnesota	Democrat	-5.53
22	Idaho	Democrat	3.98	22	Idaho	Democrat	-5.28
23	Wyoming	Democrat	4.07	23	Indiana	Democrat	-5.02
24	Arkansas	Democrat	4.26	24	South Dakota	Democrat	-4.79
25	Connecticut	Democrat	4.44	25	South Carolina	Democrat	-4.64
26	South Dakota	Democrat	4.44	26	Massachusetts	Democrat	-4.11
27	New Hampshire	Democrat	4.52	27	Arkansas	Democrat	-4.10
28	Massachusetts	Republican	4.56	28	Arizona	Democrat	-3.90
29	Georgia	Democrat	4.67	29	Delaware	Democrat	-3.81
30	Delaware	Democrat	4.71	30	North Carolina	Democrat	-3.35
31	Utah	Democrat	4.74	31	Alaska	Democrat	-3.22
32	West Virginia	Democrat	4.99	32	Connecticut	Democrat	-2.87
33	North Carolina	Democrat	5.00	33	Georgia	Democrat	-2.86
34	Alaska	Democrat	5.00	34	Utah	Democrat	-2.28
35	Oklahoma	Democrat	5.00	35	Oregon	Democrat	-1.90
36	Alabama	Democrat	5.00	36	Oklahoma	Democrat	-1.73
37	North Dakota	Republican	5.02	37	Massachusetts	Republican	-0.64
38	Indiana	Republican	5.18	38	Alabama	Democrat	0.01
39	Oregon	Democrat	5.28	39	Indiana	Republican	0.19
40	Arizona	Democrat	5.38	40	South Dakota	Republican	1.44

Table 7: Ideology of State Party Platforms, Ranked by State

(Continued)

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Rank	State	Party	CMP Scaled	Rank	State	Party	Franzmann & Kaiser Scaled
41	Idaho	Republican	5.50	41	Idaho	Republican	2.29
42	Alabama	Republican	5.53	42	Montana	Republican	2.36
43	Virginia	Republican	5.67	43	Mississippi	Republican	2.57
44	Nevada	Republican	5.71	44	Florida	Republican	2.67
45	New Hampshire	Republican	5.81	45	West Virginia	Republican	2.68
46	Vermont	Republican	5.83	46	Nebraska	Republican	2.71
47	Michigan	Republican	5.87	47	New Hampshire	Republican	2.71
48	Montana	Republican	5.93	48	Vermont	Republican	2.73
49	West Virginia	Republican	6.09	49	Connecticut	Republican	3.04
50	Texas	Republican	6.09	50	Maryland	Republican	3.08
51	Wyoming	Republican	6.10	51	Colorado	Republican	3.16
52	New Mexico	Republican	6.15	52	Illinois	Republican	3.40
53	South Dakota	Republican	6.17	53	Arkansas	Republican	3.60
54	Washington	Republican	6.19	54	Utah	Republican	3.64
55	Minnesota	Republican	6.22	55	Pennsylvania	Republican	3.64
56	Colorado	Republican	6.30	56	Michigan	Republican	3.66
57	Arkansas	Republican	6.36	57	Washington	Republican	3.76
58	Georgia	Republican	6.41	58	New Mexico	Republican	3.80
59	Illinois	Republican	6.50	59	Oregon	Republican	3.95
60	Iowa	Republican	6.57	60	Wyoming	Republican	4.05
61	Maine	Republican	6.57	61	Alabama	Republican	4.12
62	Utah	Republican	6.59	62	Iowa	Republican	4.22
63	Oklahoma	Republican	6.61	63	California	Republican	4.38
64	Oregon	Republican	6.62	64	North Carolina	Republican	4.65
65	Nebraska	Republican	6.63	65	Missouri	Republican	4.91
66	North Carolina	Republican	6.65	66	Hawaii	Republican	5.00
67	Hawaii	Republican	6.67	67	Wisconsin	Republican	5.04
68	Mississippi	Republican	6.67	68	Texas	Republican	5.07
69	Arizona	Republican	6.72	69	Kansas	Republican	5.18
70	Florida	Republican	6.79	70	Minnesota	Republican	5.27
71	Kansas	Republican	6.92	71	South Carolina	Republican	5.43
72	Connecticut	Republican	6.96	72	Nevada	Republican	5.48
73	California	Republican	6.98	73	Oklahoma	Republican	5.61
74	Missouri	Republican	7.03	74	Arizona	Republican	5.63
75	Wisconsin	Republican	7.10	75	Virginia	Republican	5.71
76	Pennsylvania	Republican	7.34	76	Louisiana	Republican	6.01
77	Maryland	Republican	7.50	77	Alaska	Republican	6.58
78	Louisiana	Republican	7.51	78	Maine	Republican	7.25
79	South Carolina	Republican	7.56	79	North Dakota	Republican	7.44
80	Alaska	Republican	7.93	80	Georgia	Republican	8.08

Table 7: Ranked Ideology of State Party Platforms

Testing the Impact of State Ideology on State Party Platform Ideology

I utilize Carsey and Harden's (2010) state ideology measure to gauge state ideology. Carsey and Harden (2010) use a combination of National Annenberg Election Surveys (NAES) and Cooperative Congressional Election Study (CCES) data to develop measures of ideology, partisanship, and policy mood of the states. Table 8 displays Carsey and Harden's (2010) state ideology scores and rankings for 2008.[84] Carsey and Harden's (2010) measure correlates highly with previous measures, including Erikson, Wright, and McIver's (1993, 2006) measure based upon CBS News / New York Times polls.

I employ two measures of political competitiveness in this analysis. The first measure of political competitiveness is that of district competitiveness from Holbrook and Van Dunk (1993). This measure is based upon state legislative district-level state legislative outcomes and includes four distinct measures, including the winning candidate's percentage of the popular vote, the margin of victory of the winning candidate, whether or not the seat is considered "safe," and whether or not the race was contested. District competiveness scores are averaged to obtain state-level scores, and higher values indicate higher levels of district competitiveness.

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[84] The Carson and Harden (2010) scores were calculated by me using the authors' data and STATA files. The authors graciously make this information available at: http://hdl.handle.net/1902.1/14032.

Rank	State	State Ideology	Rank	State	State Ideology
1	Alabama	1.605556	26	Nebraska	1.84127
2	Oklahoma	1.617021	27	New Hampshire	1.842795
3	Mississippi	1.648649	28	Nevada	1.844086
4	Louisiana	1.65641	29	Ohio	1.852393
5	Utah	1.659664	30	Virginia	1.857697
6	Tennessee	1.665505	31	Delaware	1.868421
7	Arkansas	1.681319	32	Michigan	1.870332
8	West Virginia	1.690141	33	Maine	1.871681
9	South Carolina	1.690355	34	Colorado	1.895792
10	Georgia	1.719786	35	Wisconsin	1.911612
11	Texas	1.719904	36	Oregon	1.915493
12	South Dakota	1.752577	37	Maryland	1.917733
13	Wyoming	1.765957	38	Pennsylvania	1.936104
14	Iowa	1.784211	39	Illinois	1.936787
15	Kentucky	1.785354	40	New Mexico	1.941176
16	Indiana	1.786422	41	Washington	1.971774
17	North Dakota	1.794872	42	California	1.972582
18	North Carolina	1.801117	43	Minnesota	1.982922
19	Montana	1.804688	44	Connecticut	1.99022
20	Kansas	1.804945	45	New Jersey	1.99887
21	Idaho	1.80625	46	Rhode Island	2.00000
22	Missouri	1.810209	47	New York	2.020752
23	Florida	1.815814	48	Massachusetts	2.049658
24	Arizona	1.823219	49	Hawaii	2.075758
25	Alaska	1.838235	50	Vermont	2.141026

Source: Carsey and Harden (2010)

Table 8: Carsey and Harden's 2008 State Ideology Scores

In addition, I include an updated folded Ranney index (Biddy, et al 1990). The

Ranney index combines measures on three dimensions related to partisan control over

elected offices (Thomas and Van Dunk, 1993). The index takes into account the

proportion of seats held by each party in the state legislature and the percentage of

votes each party receives in elections for statewide offices. The index also considers

how long the respective parties have controlled legislative seats and statewide offices to

account for long term partisan success. Finally, the Ranney index incorporates how

frequently the states have operated under divided government. When combined, these

three dimensions provide an index of state partisan competition ranging from 0 to 1,

where a score of 0 indicates a strong Republican dominance and a score of 1 indicates a strong Democratic dominance (Kenney and Rice 1985). A score of .5 would indicate a perfect partisan balance.[85]

Results: The Impact of State Ideology on State Party Platform Ideology

Table 9 displays the relevant results for hypotheses 4.6 and 4.7. Model 1 is a stripped down test that shows the impact of state ideology and party on the Franzmann and Kaiser's (2006) scaled ideology score for each state party platform. Consistent with hypothesis 4.6, the results indicate that conservative states are more likely to produce conservative state party platforms, even when we control for the partisan affiliation of the platforms. The results are unambiguous and highly significant.

Model 2 takes into account other variables that might be expected to influence the ideological scores of state party platforms, but only one of these additional variables reaches statistical significance – platform length measured by coding units (Table 9). The results indicate that state party platforms with fewer coding units are more conservative. While statistically significant, the diminutive coefficient indicates the effect is modest. These results provide support for hypotheses 4.6 and 4.7. State party platforms in conservative states are more conservative than in liberal states, regardless of party, and state party platforms in liberal states appear significantly more liberal than in conservative states, even when partisanship is controlled for.

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[85] The folded Ranney index:
.9000 to 1.0000: one-party Democratic
.7000 to .8999: modified one-party Democratic
.3000 to .6999: two-party
.1000 to .2999: modified one-party Republican
.0000 to .0999: one-party Republican

	Model 1 Coefficient (SE)	Model 2 Coefficient (SE)
Dependent Variable	Franzmann and Kaiser Scaled State Party Platform Ideology	Franzmann and Kaiser Scaled State Party Platform Ideology
State Ideology	-4.18 *** (1.55)	-3.45 * (2.09)
Party	-9.09 *** (0.38)	-8.86 *** (0.41)
Words	- - -	0.00 (0.00)
Coding Units	- - -	-0.01 ** (0.00)
District Competitiveness	- - -	-0.01 (0.02)
Ranney Fold	- - -	1.95 (2.36)
Election	- - -	0.00 (0.03)
Confederate	- - -	0.89 (0.56)
Constant	11.75 *** (2.85)	9.23 ** (3.98)
Adjusted R^2	.88	.89
N	80	79
* p < .10; ** p < .05; *** p < .01		

Table 9: Contributing Factors to State Party Platform Ideology

Hypothesis 4.7 suggests that state party platforms in more competitive states will be significantly closer in ideology to the national party platforms than in less competitive states. In order to test this hypothesis I used the Franzmann and Kaiser (2006) method to calculate the ideology of the national Democratic and Republican Party platforms. I then calculated the distance between the national party platform and each state party platform. The measure was calculated by subtracting the Franzmann and Kaiser (2006) scaled score of the national Democratic Party platform from each Democratic state party platform (the same process was used for the Republican Party platforms). This simple distance measure indicates how ideologically distinct the state party platforms are from their national counterparts.

	Model 3 Coefficient (SE)	Model 4 Coefficient (SE)
Dependent Variable	Ideological Distance Between National and State Party Platform	Ideological Distance Between National and State Party Platform
State Ideology	-3.45	-2.77
	(2.13)	(2.16)
Party	-7.63 ***	-7.65 ***
	(0.40)	(0.40)
District Competitiveness	-0.00	-0.01
	(0.02)	(0.02)
Ranney Fold	- - -	1.84
		(2.41)
Election	-0.01	-0.003
	(0.03)	(0.03)
Confederate	- - -	0.97 *
		(0.58)
Constant	10.46 **	7.56 *
	(3.31)	(4.11)
Adjusted R^2	.83	0.84
N	79	79
* p < .10; ** p < .05; *** p < .01		

Table 10: Contributing Factors to Ideological Distance Between State and National Parties

Model 3 is the core model used to test hypothesis 4.7 and here only partisanship is statistically significant in trying to explain the variation in ideological distance between state party platforms and national party platforms (Table 10). Contrary to hypothesis 4.7, the competitiveness of the state does not appear to matter. Model 4 is a fully specified model and again, the competitiveness of the state political environment appears insignificant, regardless of the measure used. Only partisanship and the status as a former confederate state surpass the generous p < .10 threshold.

My results suggest that state ideology influences state party platform ideology but the political competitiveness of the states do not. From this I conclude that the variations in the ideologies of state party platforms are not strategic political maneuvers, but rather sincere ideological differences among parties sharing Democratic and Republican labels. If Republicans in the different states have sets of preferences

distinct from their neighbors and the national party, we have real evidence that the American party system is a pluralistic one, rather than binary.

Conclusion

State party platforms provide state parties with an opportunity to express party values and articulate policy preferences without sound bite editing – a rare opportunity for unmediated party communication with interest groups, activists, and the public. The process of revision and compromise within the state parties provides a fascinating window into the parties' policy preferences and political priorities, and a wonderful opportunity to assess the independence of state parties. Now that the purpose and development of state party platforms is clear, the next chapter will discuss the platforms utilized in this study and will provide a detailed description of the coding scheme used to assess platform content.

Although political competitiveness does not significantly influence state party platform ideology, it is clear that platforms crafted in more conservative states are more conservative, regardless of party. Party platforms crafted in conservative states appear to incorporate state ideology, resulting in more conservative platforms from both the state Democratic and Republican parties. These results lend further evidence to the claim that *Democratic* and *Republican* party labels are malleable and subject to local conditions.

Contrary to expectations, I find more ideological diversity in Republican state party platforms than in their Democratic counterparts. While the Republican parties at all levels share many values and priorities, they are less consistent than their Democratic

rivals and less homogenous than popular culture would suggest. This finding

corroborates earlier findings of state party independence. Furthermore, Republicans

defying expectations is a behavior we will see repeated in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 5
NOT OUR CONCERN: ISSUE OWNERSHIP & STATE PARTY PLATFORMS

> *A gathering of Democrats is more sweaty, disorderly, offhand, and rowdy than a gathering of Republicans; it is also likely to be more cheerful, imaginative, tolerant of dissent, and skillful at the game of give-and-take. A gathering of Republicans is more respectable, sober, purposeful, and businesslike than a gathering of Democrats; it is also likely to be more self-righteous, pompous, cut-and-dried, and just plain boring.*[86]

In this chapter, I employ issue ownership theory to analyze the content of state party platforms. Issue ownership theory suggests that parties are perceived as more competent and better suited to handle some issues and these are the issues owned by the parties (Petrocik 1996). This perceived ownership generally is thought to be a consequence of past performance and long-standing partisan constituencies, lending great stability to ownership over time. In order for the electorate to perceive ownership, a party must demonstrate that they are committed more to addressing the issue and better suited for handling the issue than the opposing party. Table 11 lists the issues owned by the major parties. Democrats typically enjoy advantages on issues of social welfare (education, healthcare, etc.), environmental protection, civil rights, etc. Issues like national defense, traditional moral values, deficit control, and limiting government spending are owned by the Republican Party.

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[86] Clinton Rossiter, Political Scientist & Historian

Democrat Owned Issues	Republican Owned Issues	Performance Issues
Education	Defense	Foreign Policy
Healthcare	Government Spending	Economy
Helping the Middle Class	Taxes	
Senior Citizens	Religion/Morality	
Jobs/Labor	Crime	
Environment	Drug Abuse	
Civil Liberties	Civil & Social Order	
Civil Rights	Economic Regulation	
Social Welfare	Increasing US Influence	
Farmers & Agriculture	Controlling Inflation	
Relations Among Social Groups and Classes	Reducing the Deficit	
Women's Interests		
Protecting Social Security		
Keeping US Out of War		
Poverty		

Source: Petrocik (1996); Petrocik, Benoit, Hansen (2004)

Table 11: Issue Ownership Categories

Persuasiveness regarding competence and focus is critical. Many voters are concerned primarily with making sure the winning candidate will address effectively the issues they deem most important; generally, they are concerned less about the precise policies instituted to solve the problem (Petrocik, Benoit, Hansen 2003). Because parties and candidates seek to market and promote themselves within political campaigns, rather than to change minds about specific policies, agenda control can be critical to party success (Petrocik 1996). My test of issue ownership theory in state party platforms begins with two simple hypotheses:

- Hypothesis 5.1: Democratic state party platforms will focus on Democrat owned issues significantly more than issues owned by Republicans.
- Hypothesis 5.2: Republican state party platforms will focus on Republican owned issues significantly more than issues owned by Democrats.

While many issues are owned consistently by one party over time, other issues are more vulnerable (Petrocik 1996). Issues like the national economy and foreign policy are not consistently owned by either party but shift back and forth in response to

perceived or expected performance. These performance issues are not owned, but rather leased by the parties. These performance issues can be especially important in election cycles affected by financial crises and international threats. Because of the fiscal crisis at play and the multiple active military engagements of the US between 2008 and 2010, I expect performance issues to account for a significant, but minority portion of state party platforms.

- Hypothesis 5.3: Performance issues will account for a significant, but minority portion of state party platforms.

Issue ownership is important because voters reward candidates who run on salient party-owned issues, and partisan voters identify issues owned by their party as more salient than issues owned by the opposing party. When candidates set the agenda to focus on issues their party owns, they encourage voters to use these issues to guide voting decisions.

Beyond US National Politics

Previous research has found compelling, if not conclusive, evidence of issue ownership at play in American elections. Studies have found support for issue ownership theory in presidential and congressional elections – in campaign advertisements, speeches, and debates (Benoit and Hansen 2004; Herrnson and Curry 2011; Petrocik 1996, Petrocik, Benoit, and Hansen 2004). Despite significant empirical support for issue ownership theory, the tendency to focus on American presidential elections severely limits the generalizability of the theory. While developed in the American context, there is evidence that the core of issue ownership theory applies

internationally (Belanger 2003; Pogorelis, et al. 2005). Parties in other western-style

democracies appear to hold advantages on some issues across time linked to

perceptions of competency. Moreover, when issue ownership is examined in a

comparative context, evidence suggests that parties generally attempt to develop areas

of issue expertise, rather than simply adopting opposing positions on a common set of

topics (Klingemann, Hofferbert, and Budge 1994).

Even as researchers begin testing the applicability of issue ownership theory

internationally, efforts to test the theory within the American states or beyond

presidential (and to a lesser extent, congressional elections) remains limited. Further

research at the state level is essential because state politics governments are dominated

by a set of policy issues distinct from those dominating national politics and many of

these issues are owned by Democrats. Typically, issues perceived as most salient in

presidential elections are owned by Republicans and research has shown repeatedly

that the Republican saliency advantage in national elections often compels Democrats

to diverge from their preferred topics (Petrocik, Benoit, and Hansen 2003; Damore

2004; 2005). These observations of national party behavior lead me to hypothesize that

Republican state party platforms will concentrate on issues owned by their party more

consistently than Democratic state party platforms.

- Hypothesis 5.4: Republican state party platforms will concentrate on issues owned by their party more consistently than Democratic state party platforms.

I expect state party platforms to focus on issues their party owns and

strategically frame any issues on which they trespass. At times, an opponent's

advantage on an owned issue can be undermined with the use of strategic framing

(Holian 2004; Sides 2006). Presidential candidate Bill Clinton used this strategy

successfully in the 1992 presidential race, by reframing and focusing on a specific

portion of the crime issue. Although Republicans generally are perceived as better

qualified to handle law and order issues, Democrats often are perceived as better suited

for dealing with crime prevention – an important subset of law and order. By framing

the perceived crime problem in the United States as a failure to adequately address the

sources of crime, Clinton was able to use a Republican-owned issue against his

Republican opponent.

In the end, how parties phrase policy positions in the platforms can be as

important as the position taken. It appears that parties construct policy planks so as to

reassure relevant interest groups and placate a variety of political leaders, activists, and

partisan voters; groups and activists examine party platforms for references to their

favored interests (Domke and Coe 2008). Language may be conciliatory in nature, but

other times, parties may choose to take more aggressive policy stances. Although the

parties are likely to agree on a variety of specific policy positions, they often choose

dramatically different approaches that will be seen as attractive to distinctive sets of

interest groups and individuals. As a result, parties are expected to take great care in

how they address volatile issues and which words they choose.

Measuring Issue Ownership Patterns in State Party Platforms

The persuasiveness of issue ownership theory relies heavily on the validity of

issue categorization. For the first test, the 56 policy categories are divided into four

classifications – Democratic owned issues, Republican owned issues, performance

issues, and "other" issues. Table 12 shows how each policy is categorized. To determine

what proportion of state party platforms address each category of issues, the number of

coding units addressing Democratic owned issues are summed, then divided by the total

number of coding units in that platform. This provides a simple measure of what

percentage of a platform's quasi-sentences address Democratic owned issues for each

available state party platform. An identical measure is created for Republican owned

issues, performance issues, and the "other" category. The results indicate, on average,

what percentage of coding units in state party platforms address each category of

issues.[87]

Democratic Issue Focus = ∑ (Democratic Owned Issues) / ∑ (All Issues)

Republican Issue Focus = ∑ (Republican Owned Issues) / ∑ (All Issues)

Performance Issue Focus = ∑ (Performance Issues) / ∑ (All Issues)

Other Issue Focus = ∑ (Other Issues) / ∑ (All Issues)

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[87] The STATA do file for this chapter is available in Appendix D. The accompanying dataset is available from the author upon request.

Code	Category Description	Ownership Categorization Test 1	Ownership Categorization Test 2
DOMAIN 1: External Relations			
101	Foreign Special Relationships: Positive	Performance Issue	Performance Issue
102	Foreign Special Relationships: Negative	Performance Issue	Performance Issue
103	Anti-Imperialism	Democrat Owned	Democrat Owned
104	Military: Positive	Republican Owned	Republican Owned
105	Military: Negative	Democrat Owned	Democrat Owned
106	Peace	Performance Issue	Performance Issue
107	Internationalism: Positive	Democrat Owned	Democrat Owned
109	Internationalism: Negative	Republican Owned	Republican Owned
DOMAIN 2: Freedom and Democracy			
200	Libertarianism	Republican Owned	Republican Owned
201	Freedom and Human Rights	Democrat Owned	Democrat Owned
202	Democracy	Other	- - -
203	Constitutionalism: Positive	Other	- - -
204	Constitutionalism: Negative	Other	- - -
DOMAIN 3: Political System			
301	Federalism/States' Rights	Republican Owned	Republican Owned
302	Centralisation	Democrat Owned	Democrat Owned
303	Governmental and Administrative Efficiency	Republican Owned	Republican Owned
304	Political Corruption	Other	- - -
305	Political Authority	Other	- - -
DOMAIN 4: Economy			
401	Free Market Economy	Republican Owned	Performance Issue
402	Incentives	Republican Owned	Performance Issue
403	Market Regulation	Democrat Owned	Performance Issue
404	Economic Planning	Performance Issue	Performance Issue
405	Corporatism/ Mixed Economy	Performance Issue	Performance Issue
406	Protectionism: Positive	Republican Owned	Performance Issue
407	Protectionism: Negative	Democrat Owned	Performance Issue
408	Economic Goals	Performance Issue	Performance Issue
409	Keynesian Demand Management	Performance Issue	Performance Issue
410	Economic Growth	Performance Issue	Performance Issue
411	Technology and Infrastructure	Other	Performance Issue
412	Controlled Economy	Democrat Owned	Performance Issue
413	Nationalisation	Other	Performance Issue
414	Economic Orthodoxy	Republican Owned	Performance Issue
415	Marxist Analysis	Other	Performance Issue
416	Sustainability	Democrat Owned	Performance Issue

Table 12: Ownership Categorization of Policy Issues

Code	Category Description	Ownership Categorization Test 1	Ownership Categorization Test 2
DOMAIN 5: Welfare and Quality of Life			
501	Environmental Protection	Democrat Owned	Democrat Owned
502	Culture	Democrat Owned	Democrat Owned
503	Equality	Democrat Owned	Democrat Owned
504	Welfare State: Positive	Democrat Owned	Democrat Owned
505	Welfare State: Negative	Republican Owned	Republican Owned
506	Education Expansion	Democrat Owned	Democrat Owned
507	Education Limitation	Republican Owned	Republican Owned
508	The Myth of Global Warming	Republican Owned	Republican Owned
DOMAIN 6: Fabric of Society			
601	National Way of Life: Positive	Other	- - -
602	National Way of Life: Negative	Other	- - -
603	Traditional Morality: Positive	Republican Owned	Republican Owned
604	Traditional Morality: Negative	Democrat Owned	Democrat Owned
605	Law and Order	Republican Owned	Republican Owned
606	Civic Mindedness	Democrat Owned	Democrat Owned
607	Multiculturalism: Positive	Democrat Owned	Democrat Owned
608	Multiculturalism: Negative	Republican Owned	Republican Owned
DOMAIN 7: Social Groups			
701	Labour Groups: Positive	Democrat Owned	Democrat Owned
702	Labour Groups: Negative	Republican Owned	Republican Owned
703	Agriculture and Farmers: Positive	Democrat Owned	Democrat Owned
704	Middle Class and Professional Groups	Democrat Owned	Democrat Owned
705	Underprivileged Minority Groups	Democrat Owned	Democrat Owned
706	Non-economic Demographic Groups	Other	- - -

Table 12: Ownership Categorization of Policy Issues

Results

Hypothesis 5.1 suggests that Democratic state party platforms will focus on Democrat owned issues significantly more than on issues owned by Republicans. The results are consistent with this expectation. More than 60 percent of policy statements in Democratic state party platforms address issues owned by the Democratic Party (Table 13). On average, only 11 percent of policy statements in Democratic state party platforms trespass onto issues owned by the Republican Party, and 5 percent address performance issues, including the economy.

	Democratic Platforms	Republican Platforms
	% of Coding Units	*% of Coding Units*
Democrat Owned	62%	20%
Republican Owned	11%	52%
Performance Issues	5%	7%
Other Issues	23%	21%
Total	100%	100%
Note: Test 1 Results; includes issues in "other" category; economic issues split among categories.		

Table 13: Issue Ownership in State Party Platforms

Republican state party platforms follow a similar, but less forceful pattern. Approximately 52 percent of quasi-sentences in Republican state party platforms address Republican owned issues, compared to the 20 percent which address Democratic owned issues (Figure 13). Again, performance issues account for less than 10 percent of all coding units in Republican state party platforms. These results lend credence to hypothesis 5.2; Republican state party platforms address Republican owned issues significantly more than Democratic owned issues.
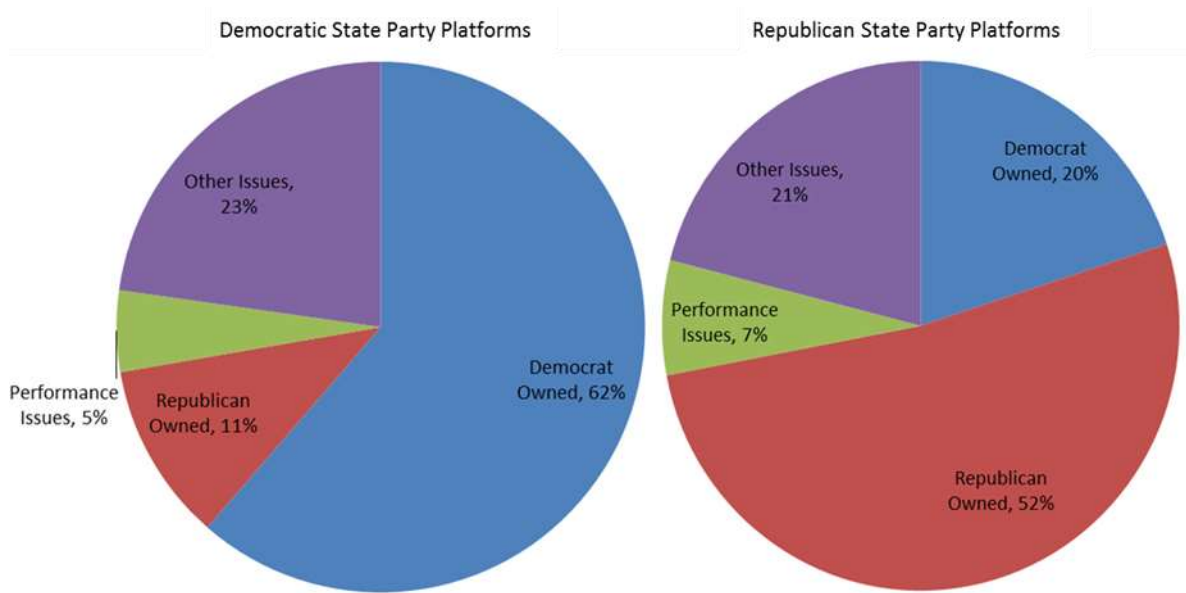
Figure 13: Issue Ownership in State Party Platforms

The validity of coding is critically important to identifying patterns of issue ownership in state party platforms and it is necessary to demonstrate that bias is not playing a significant role in the results. If we simplify the issue ownership classification and use only three categories – Democratic owned issues, Republican owned issues, and performance issues, we can eliminate some of the possible uncertainty (Table 12). Issues that would normally be categorizes as "other," meaning they did not neatly fall into party owned categories or as performance issues, are dropped from the analysis altogether. Furthermore, by categorizing all economic policy categories as performance issues, rather than distinguishing between liberal- and conservative-leaning positions, we can lend additional simplicity and further reduce the opportunity for bias. Only some of the economic issues examined in this analysis can be reliably linked to Democrats and Republicans by the existing literature. Separating economic issue categories introduces unnecessary validity concerns without adding substantial explanatory value to the results. While we may assume liberal positions should be attributed to Democratic ownership, this assumption cannot be adequately defended. Issue ownership is concerned with the party deemed most capable of handling distinct sets of issues, not how the issues are addressed. Thus, while free market principles may be a conservative notion, it is not an owned issue. This simplified ownership coding scheme is a more appropriate way to examine ownership patterns. Only issues which clearly fall into a party owned category or are clearly performance issues are examined.

	Democratic Platforms	Republican Platforms
	% of Coding Units	*% of Coding Units*
Democrat Owned	71%	23%
Republican Owned	9%	48%
Performance Issues	20%	29%
	100%	100%

Table 14: Issue Ownership in State Party Platforms, Simplified Categorization

When this simplified categorization theme is applied to state party platforms,

the numerical results change significantly, although the conclusions do not (Table 14).

Using both categorization schemes, Democratic state party platforms demonstrate a

distinct preference for Democratic owned issues, and Republicans state party platforms

are noticeably partial to Republican owned issues (Figure 14). These results indicate

clear support for hypotheses 5.1 and 5.2. When the simplified coding scheme is applied,

the tendency of Democratic state party platforms to focus on issues their party owns

intensifies. Nearly three-quarters of Democratic state party platforms are devoted to

Democratic owned issues (Figure 14). Like their Democratic counterparts, Republican

state party platforms emphasize performance issues and allocate nearly a third of their

platforms to these leased issues. However, unlike the Democrats, Republican state party

platforms devote a substantial portion of their contents to issues owned by their

opponents.
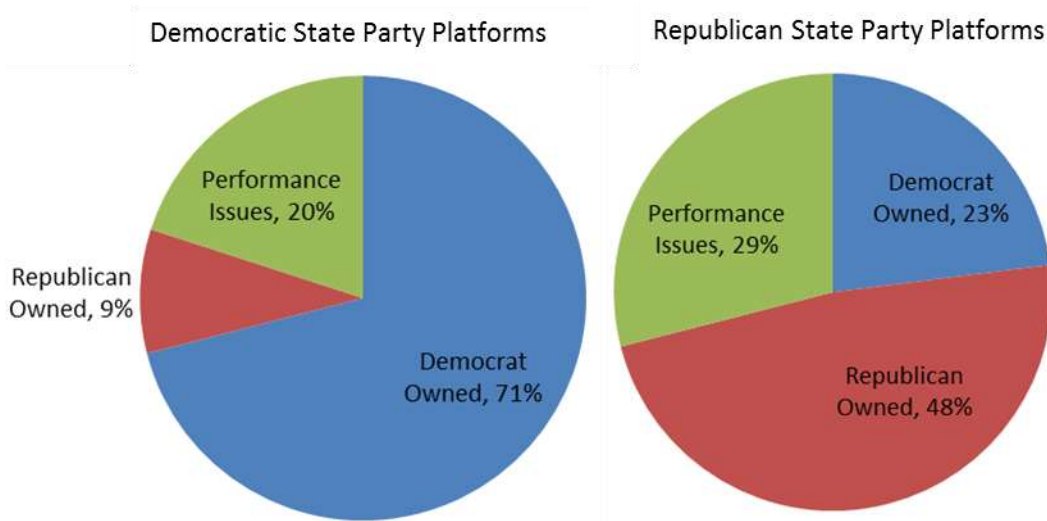
Figure 14: Issue Ownership in State Party Platforms, Simplified Categorization

While these results are encouraging, they are based upon the average attention dedicated to Democratic and Republican owned issues, and over-emphasis on averages can obscure important differences among the states. Figure 15 and Figure 16 display the proportion of state party platforms dedicated to party owned issues for each state. The averages support hypotheses 5.1 and 5.2, but it is clear that state parties do not behave consistently with one another. The degree to which the parties diverge suggests significant differences in salience, focus, and political needs.

The results in Figure 14 indicate support for hypothesis 5.3 as well. Performance issues (defined as any economic or foreign policy issue position) account for 20 and 29 percent of Democratic and Republican state party platforms, respectively. As with nearly all issues, the degree to which state party platforms focus on performance issues varies significantly across state lines, as well as party (Figure 17). While party averages for performance issues are similar for Democrats and Republicans at the state level, the party banner hides some deviation. It is clear that performance issues account for no

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more than 40 percent of any Democratic state party platform and account for a third of

Democratic platforms in only four states.[88] In contrast, performance issues appear, on

average, 10 percent more often in Republican state party platforms and performance

issues account for more than a third of platform issue content in 14 Republican state

party platforms.[89] The high salience of these issues in 2008-10, and the fact that they

are not owned consistently by either party means that this focus on performance issues

should not come as a surprise.[90] In both 2008 and 2010 (and 2012, for that matter)

economic issues rank as the most important issue to Americans (Gallup 2012).

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[88] Performance issues account for 39 percent of the Alabama Democratic state party platform, 35 percent of the Michigan Democratic, and 33 percent of the New Hampshire and Connecticut Democratic platforms.
[89] Colorado, Connecticut, Florida, Hawaii, Idaho, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Montana, Nevada, North Dakota, Vermont, Virginia, and Wyoming.
[90] These results are consistent with previous work on 2008 presidential campaign advertisements where economic policy was a major area of focus (Foster-Shoaf 2010).
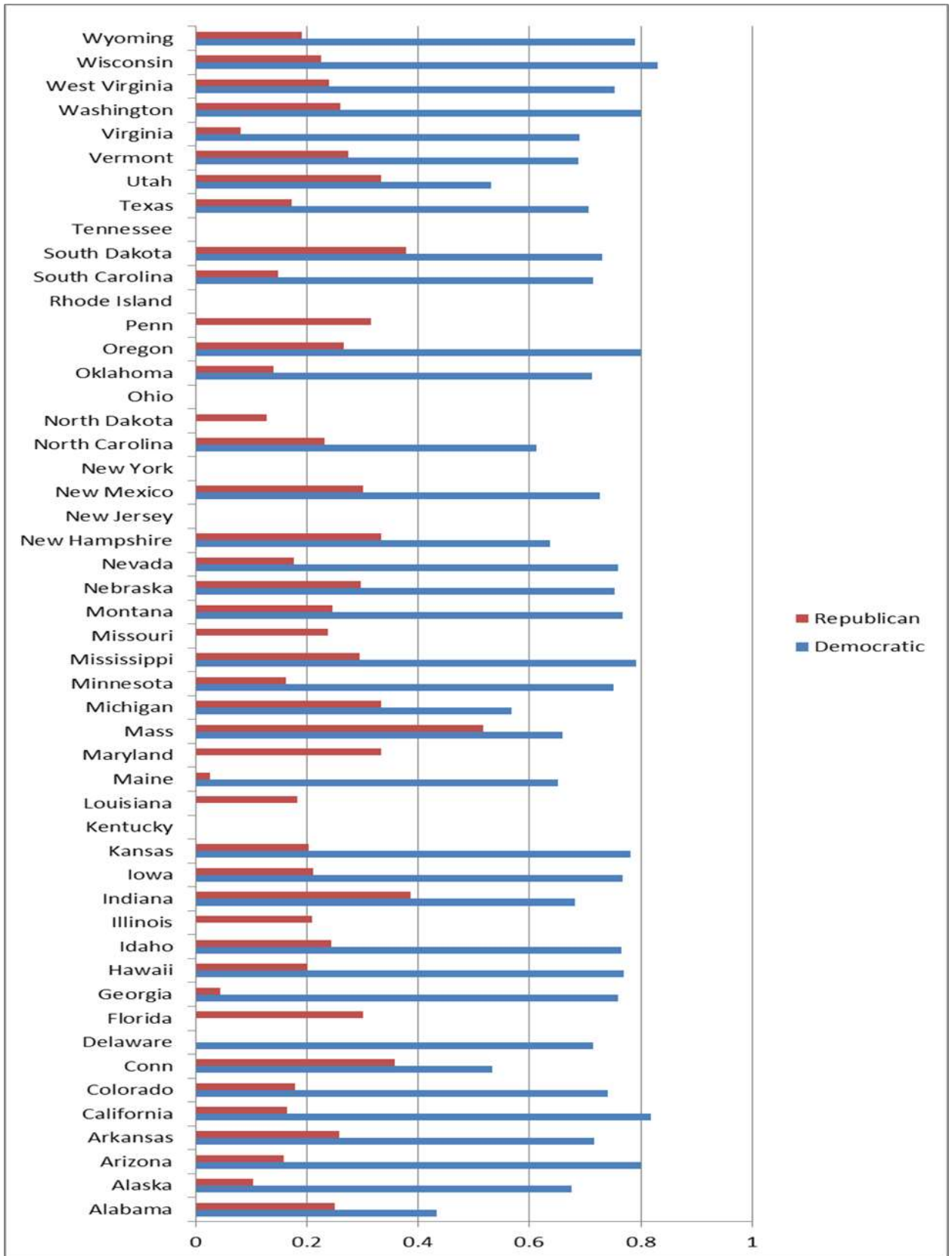
Figure 15: Proportion of State Party Platforms Dedicated to Democratic Owned Issues, by Party and State
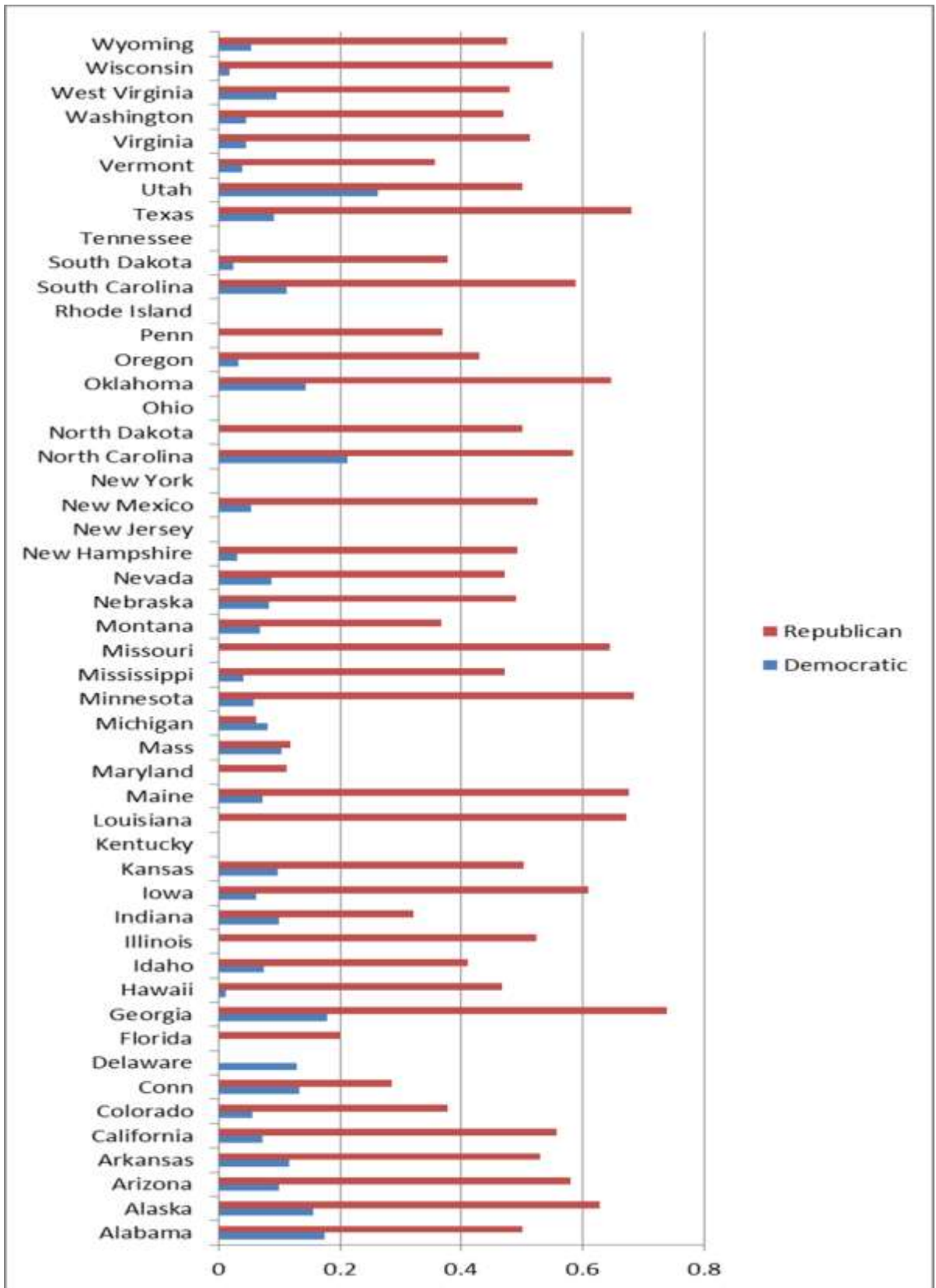
Figure 16: Proportion of State Party Platforms Dedicated to Republican Owned Issues, by Party and State

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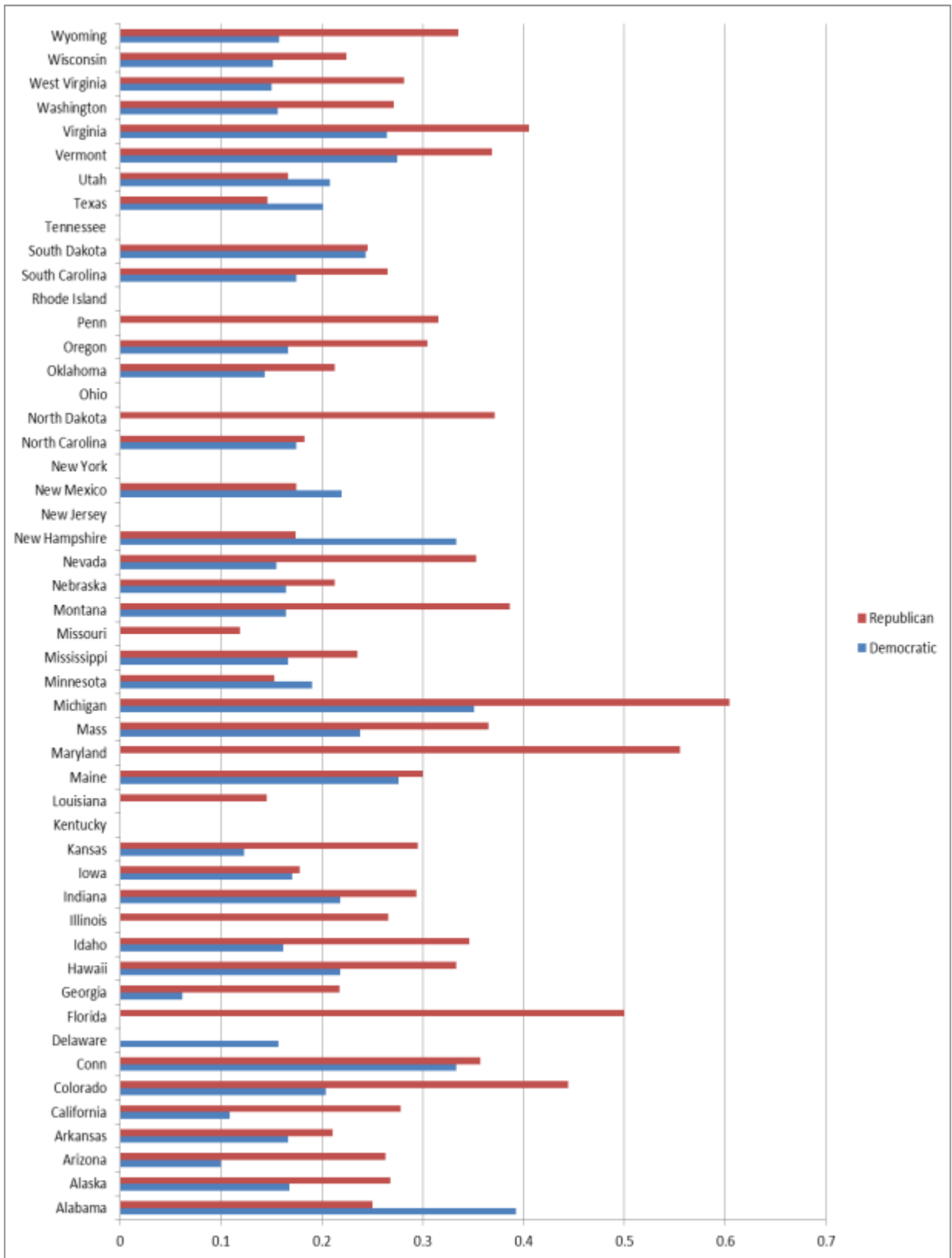
Figure 17: Proportion of State Party Platforms Devoted to Performance Issues, by Party and State

Contrary to hypothesis 5.4, under both categorization schemes, Democratic state party platforms adhere to the expectations of issue ownership theory more stringently than Republican state party platforms. This finding, in particular, is interesting. At the national level, when examining candidate rhetoric and campaign advertisements, the Republican Party tends to conform to issue ownership expectations more rigidly than their Democratic counterparts. At the national level, Democrats are more likely to trespass onto Republican owned issue areas; when we look at state party platforms, this pattern is reversed.

While this may be an artifact of the election covered by this analysis, it may be that the state and local interests are influencing state party platforms in a way that they do not in presidential or congressional elections. In addition to addressing issues of national concern (foreign policy, national security, Social Security, etc.), state party platforms also address local and regional concerns. Because state officials and state/local activists are often involved in the crafting of state party platforms, it would seem reasonable that state and local issues would be commonly addressed. In some ways, this might make it easier for Democrats to remain more consistently focused on Democrat-owned issues. Issues that are generally perceived as most salient in national elections are skewed towards Republican ownership, but the issues most relevant at the state level are often owned by the Democrats (Damore 2004). This variation in the saliency dynamics may help explain why at the national level Republicans are more consistent with issue ownership expectations, but at the state level Democrats are more consistent.

Explaining Ownership Patterns

On average, 70 percent of Democratic state party platforms address Democratic owned issues and half of Republican state party platforms focus on Republican owned issues. These averages, however, mask significant variations across the states (Figure 15;Figure 16). So, what factors account for the variations we see between the states?

	Democratic State Party Platforms		Republican State Party Platforms	
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
Dependent Variable	*Democratic Owned Proportion*	*Democratic Owned Proportion*	*Republican Owned Proportion*	*Republican Owned Proportion*
Franzmann & Kaiser Ideology Scaled	-.031 ***	-.031 ***	.051 ***	.051 ***
	(.008)	(.001)	(.010)	(.009)
Coding Units	-.001 **	-.001 **	.001 **	.001***
	(.000)	(.000)	(.000)	(.000)
District Competitiveness	-.000	.000	.003	.002
	(.001)	(.001)	(.002)	(.002)
Density	-.000	-.000	-.001 **	-.001 **
	(.000)	(.000)	(.000)	(.000)
Confederate	.013	- - -	-.005	- - -
	(.033)		(.045)	
RegionC	.014 **	.013 **	-.005	-.004
	(.005)	(.005)	(.007)	(.007)
Election Result	.000	- - -	-.000	- - -
	(.001)		(.002)	
State Ideology	- - -	-.007	- - -	0.008
		(.110)		(.139)
Constant	.515 ***	.540 **	.187	0.159
	(.079)	(.178)	(.128)	(.270)
Adjusted R^2	.423	.440	.641	.651
N	37	37	43	43
* p < .10; ** p < .05; *** p < .01				

Table 15: Predicting the Proportion of State Party Platforms Devoted to Owned Issues, by Party

If we examine only Democratic state party platforms, we can see that platform ideology, platform length, and region all influence the proportion of Democratic state party platforms dedicated to Democratic owned issues (Table 15, models 1 and 2). The proportion of coding units dedicated to Democratic owned issues increases as Democratic state party platforms become more liberal and shorter. When state

Democratic platform committees feel pressure (from either internal or external forces)

to produce more concise platforms, it appears that they typically prioritize Democratic

owned issues. Only when Democratic state party platforms become longer do they

integrate significant proportions of Republican owned issues. Democratic state party

platforms are also significantly more likely to address Democratic owned issues in the

northeast and east north central census regions (Table 16). Interestingly, the political

competitiveness of the state and the ideological bend of the state have no effect on

Democrats' decision to focus on owned issues.

		Level of Focus on Democratic Owned Issues		
	Number	High	Medium	Low
New England	5	100%	-	-
Mid-Atlantic	2	50%	50%	-
South Atlantic	4	25%	75%	-
East South Central	2	50%	-	50%
West South Central	3	-	100%	-
East North Central	3	67%	-	33%
West North Central	5	-	60%	40%
Mountain	8	13%	37%	50%
Pacific	5	20%	-	80%
Note: Pearson's Chi-Squared = 33.14, p < .007				

Table 16: Degree of Focus on Democratic Owned Issues in Democratic State Party Platforms by US Census Region

When we look at Republican state party platforms in isolation, platform

ideology, length, and state population density appear to influence the decision to focus

on Republican owned issues (Table 15, models 3 and 4). As Republican state party

platforms become more conservative and longer, the focus on Republican owned issue

increases. While Democratic state party platforms trespass more frequently with

increased length, Republican state party platforms do the reverse. As Republican state

party platforms become longer, the extra space is filled with Republican owned issues.

This suggests that Republican state party platform committees may feel pressure to address a certain core set of salient state issues owned by their opponents, despite inherent political disadvantages.

Republican state party platforms are also more likely to address Republican owned issues in less densely populated states. Additional research is needed to determine if this pattern holds over time and to assess the full impact population density has on platform development. Unlike their Democratic counterparts, region does not appear to have any effect on ownership focus for Republican state party platforms. As with the Democratic results, the competitiveness of the state and the ideological bend of the state have no effect on Democrats' decision to focus on owned issues.

If we look at the Democratic and Republican state party platforms together, some interesting patterns emerge. As models 5 and 6 indicate, as state party platforms become more liberal, shorter, and the ideology of the state moves left, the focus on Democratic owned issues increases (Table 17). If we wanted to examine where the prevalence of Republican owned issues is higher, we ought to look for longer, conservative platforms in lower density states. Although elections results and state ideology measures help predict the incidence of Democrat owned issues, these measures offer no insight into the prevalence of Republican owned issues.

	All State Party Platforms	
	Model 5	Model 6
Dependent Variable	*Democratic Owned Proportion*	*Republican Owned Proportion*
Franzmann & Kaiser	-.052 ***	.044 ***
Ideology Scaled	(.001)	(.002)
Coding Units	-.001 ***	.001 **
	(.000)	(.000)
District Competitiveness	-.001	.001
	(.001)	(.001)
Density	.000	-.001 **
	(.000)	(.000)
RegionC	.008 **	.004
	(.003)	(.004)
Election Result	- - -	- - -
State Ideology	-1.23 **	-.048
	(.062)	(.085)
Constant	.678 ***	.370 **
	(.111)	(.151)
Adjusted R^2	.946	.871
N	80	80
* p < .10; ** p < .05; *** p < .01		

Table 17: Predicting the Proportion of State Party Platforms Devoted to Owned Issues, Democrat and Republican

Conclusion

The sharp distinction between party behavior at the national level and the state

level is critical for our understanding of the American party system. In contemporary

politics, the Republican Party often finds itself the target of pointed criticism for the

party's intense focus on particular issue areas and the lack of regard shown to other

areas of public policy. The perceived homogeneity of the Republican Party and their

demonstrated narrow focus has caused some political observers to predict the

approaching downfall of the Republican Party. With only two major national parties,

each must operate a big tent coalition to survive and the Republican Party's narrow

focus and inflexibility make it appear vulnerable. However, these results suggest that

the concern for the long-term viability of the Republican Party might be premature.

Although the patterns of behavior of the national party may appear strategically

questionable, the state Republican parties are engaging in very different patterns of behavior. As such, the state parties and their independence might be the saving grace of national parties gone awry. More research is needed to ensure that the observed pattern is not an artifact of an election cycle which favored the Democratic Party, and to confirm that the national-level and state-level behavioral differences of the parties exist beyond platform content. However, these results provide specific, tangible evidence that party behavior differs at the national and state levels.

CHAPTER 6
FIFTY STATES UNDER GOD: MORALITY POLITICS & STATE PARTY PLATFORMS

In the months leading up to the 2008 general election a series of events dramatically shifted the attention of Americans to the economy. In November 2008, 77 percent of respondents identified economic issues as the nation's most important problem and it was this focus that many argue gave the Democrats an edge (Newport 2011). Concern for the economy has not diminished. In January 2008, 36 percent of Americans were satisfied with the state of the nation's economy, compared to just 13 percent four years later (Saad 2012). At the same time, the percentage of Americans who were satisfied with the moral and ethical climate of the United State fell to 28 percent from 39 percent (Gallup 2012). Even when nearly three-quarters of Americans identify economic issues as the most important problems facing the nation, issues of morality often find a way into the public debate. While Americans insist economic issues are most critical in the current political climate, television, print, and online news sources suggests while Americans are concerned about the economy, they remain fixated on the politics of sex. Consider a few of the debates in the limelight in early 2012:

- While access to contraception was affirmed in 1965, a fresh debate over the use of birth control and the ability of government to mandate its coverage by insurance companies is raging now (Cohen 2012). The mandate is being attacked by religious leaders fearful that employers' religious freedoms would be violated if insurance companies are required to provide contraception coverage in employee health insurance plans.
- Virginia lawmakers recently considered a bill which would require women seeking to terminate a pregnancy to undergo an extremely invasive vaginal ultrasound procedure. Outcry over the proposed legislation, which became a

key talking point on late night television, and backtracking by the state's conservative governor led to significant changes in the bill.

- "Personhood" legislation, giving embryos full rights, is hot right now. Opponents argue such measures would restrict a women's right to make their own healthcare decisions, while others are concerned about the possible implications of such measures on certain types of contraceptives (especially IUDs) and in-vitro fertilization.[91] In recent months, legislatures in Virginia (Weinger 2012) and Oklahoma (Hoberock 2012), and Mississippi voters considered comparable amendments (Wagster 2011).
- Gay rights advocates received new reasons to cheer – the Obama administration announced that it will no longer defend the controversial 1996 Defense of Marriage Act in court (Rosenblatt 2012), a federal appeals court overturned proposition 8 in California (Hennessey 2012), legislatures in Washington (La Courte 2012), Maryland (Breitenbach 2012), and New Jersey[92] – all in the month of February.

What this sampling of events from the first 60 days of 2012 indicates is a significant concern for morality politics, even within a political environment where economic issues are paramount. It seems that even when Americans recognize the importance of economic issues, they remain hooked on morality politics. The United States also has a historical devotion to the separation of church and state, but both the basis of this notion and what it means in practice remain hotly debated. Some of the problems stem from the fact that Americans' notions of what constitutes the proper role of religion in the public square depends heavily upon ones' denomination and personal beliefs, the issue at hand, and the point in history in which we inquire. However, despite the delicacy of religion and morality discussions, the issues remain highly salient even when voter agree on the primacy of economic issues.[93]

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[91] Pope Benedict XVI called on Catholic follower to reject "artificial procreation", including in-vitro fertilization, calling such actions a form of arrogance (USA Today 2012).

[92] Governor Chris Christie vetoed the New Jersey legislation (Popovici and Warner 2012).

[93] When speaking of religions explicitness is imperative. For the purposes of this project, religion will be defines as : "A set of beliefs in a transcendent God, grounded in an authoritative text, and expressed by a body of believers through the performance of certain rituals and adherence to a specific moral code".

God in America

> *History has shown with tragic consistency that too intimate a relationship between religion and politics can do irreparable damage to both- from the crusades of medieval times to the terrorism of modern times. Constant use of the God strategy by political leaders encourages just such a relationship…. Pairing religious doctrine with public policy encourages citizens to conclude that the US government's actions are the will of God- or at least congruent with such wishes- and therefore beyond question.[94]*

The very early beginning of European colonization of North America was driven, in part, for a desire for religious freedom. Although these early settlers seeking religious freedom were not pursuing freedom from religion, they certainly rejected the imposition of others' religious values upon them. Yet, our founding mythology of the birth of America as a Christian nation,[95] under the auspices of our honorable founding fathers is just that – a myth. Grounded upon facts, but embellished for effect, our country has deep ties to faith, but not as either atheists or evangelicals would like to believe.

Many of our founding fathers were men of faith, but they often pursued their faith in rather unconventional ways. Thomas Jefferson, for example, edited his own version of the Bible, and James Madison viewed his presidential proclamations recommending public days of prayer unfavorably later in life (Mooney 1990). Our

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Similarly, clarity with regard to the definition of politics is also important. Here politics will mean "the process that establishes priorities, formulates policies, and allocates resources among competing interests" (Lambert 2008).

[94] Domke and Coe 2008, 140.

[95] Interestingly, calls to return to our Christian roots, back to the founders' original devotion to Protestantism are nearly as old as the nation itself. In July 1827, Philadelphia minister Ezra Stiles Ely said, "We are a Christian nation: we ought to have a right to demand that all our rulers in their conduct shall conform to Christian morality; and if they do not, it is the duty and privilege of Christian freemen to make a new and better election" (Lambert 2008, 2).

founding fathers recognized the utility of religion in public life in promoting public

virtue, but they also appreciated its potential for danger. They were not so far removed

from "the religious strife that had plagued Europe for centuries- the very strife that had

compelled their ancestors to seek religious freedom in a new world" (Domke and Coe

2008, 140). Thus, the founders did not design a Christian nation where only one view of

morality was to be accepted, nor did they create a godless empire with no room for

religious faith. Perhaps more to the point, the American founding was not a morally

pure endeavor – slavery was shielded[96] and the equality of women dismissed (Feldman

2006).Like most successful endeavors, varied and conflicting interests were balanced

and no one walked away entirely satisfied. Contemporary observers have noted the

disconnect between the American founding mythology and reality. Although coarse,

author Jon Meacham sums up this contradiction succinctly,

> The right's contention that we are a 'Christian nation' that has
> fallen from pure origins and can achieve redemption by some kind of
> return to Christian values is based upon wishful thinking, not convincing
> historical argument.[97]

Despite the fact that our founding mythology overstates the framers'

enthusiasm for religion in the public sphere, our modern addiction to morality politics is

likely a consequence of our religious traditions. Religion plays an important practical

role in American life helping to make up for a decreased sense of community and the

need for stable social identity (Wald and Calhoun-Brown 2007). Economic and social

mobility undermines traditional social differentiation, physical mobility weakens

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[96] For the longest time southern evangelicals supported slavery claiming Biblical support for the practice (Kohut et al. 2000).
[97] Meacham 2007, 18.

traditional community ties, and immigration patterns produce waves of cultural change. In this environment, religion serves as a social anchor for many. This is as true today as it was when Tocqueville wrote of America, "The religious atmosphere of the country was the first thing that struck me on my arrival in the United States." Even today, Americans are generally more religious than citizens of other western democracies despite a lack of any official religion. Survey research consistently finds that as per capita income of nations rises, religiosity diminishes, with one exception – the United States (Domke and Coe 2008).

The consistent prominence of religion in America often obscures the fact that religion itself is not a static concept. While many of the world's largest religions have been around for thousands of years, modern religions are not perfect reflections of their roots. Even something as infallible as a sacred text must be viewed with an eye on history. The way sacred texts are interpreted, or even what is included in sacred texts is known to change over time. The rituals practiced in furtherance of religion are even more susceptible to change (Eck 2001). This is critical because as religions change, so does the intersection of God and government. Consider, for example, that while modern politicians are often heard invoking the name of God in their speeches, this is not as traditional is it may seem. Richard Nixon was the first to end a presidential address with "God bless America" and historically most presidents refrained from invoking God in presidential addresses at all. Ronald Reagan introduced the modern trend of invoking God, and his successors in both parties have followed suit (Domke and Coe 2008). It is not to say that religion is a new topic in the political arena, or that attacks on politicians'

faith are a modern phenomenon. One of the most personally nasty elections in American history took place in 1800 when one newspaper printed, "God- and a religious president or….Jefferson-and no God" (Meacham 2007, 104).

Not only is a demonstration of faith important for political leaders, but those wishing to win public favor must consider the specifics of their professed faith. In the late 19th century objections to the inclusion of Catholics in the political process was common (Hamburger 2002). Concerns that Catholic citizens would align their political activities with the wishes of the Pope were widespread, and it was not until John F. Kennedy demonstrated his independence from the Catholic Church that this apprehension began to fade. Interestingly, for Kennedy, it was necessary to divorce his faith from his political self but today candidates need to exhibit their faith. In 2004, presidential hopeful John Kerry found it politically expedient to demonstrate his faithfulness to the Catholic Church, in spite of his being denied communion and refusal to denounce abortion rights (Domke and Coe 2008). While denomination is less politically important today than the perceived degree of religious faith, denominational differences still exist. In the 2012 Republican primary race, Mitt Romney had to field attacks that his Mormon faith is a "cult".

Faith beyond Ideology

The use of religion to justify policy positions is as old as religion itself. Although our contemporary political environment leads us to perceive religious faith as a conservative feature, historically, both liberals and conservatives have fought to use God to push forth their pet policies. Religion has been used to call for an end to slavery,

for the advancement of the civil rights movement, to fight apartheid, to support anti-war movements, to advocate for expanded suffrage rights, to support the temperance movement, and bolster Cold War fears over "Godless communism" (Domke and Coe 2008; Wilcox and Robinson 2011).

The language we use to discuss morality politics can influence our policy preferences. Social conservatives often use the language of "rights" in support of their conservative agenda. Rather than making the argument that the United States is a Christian nation, thus we all should adhere to Christian values (like prayer in public school, eschewing of evolutionary theory, etc.) the focus is put on the protection of rights for religious individuals. They speak of the right of children to practice their religion via prayer, the rights of the unborn, and the rights of parents to raise their children as they see fit (Wilcox and Robinson 2011). They argue that the secular movement is trampling the rights of the faithful and argue that they are simply acting in self-defense against liberalizing social change.

Why Morality Politics?

In my pursuit of a better understanding of the American party system and state political parties, I have chosen to focus on a subset of policies known as morality politics. Morality policies are those based upon core principles on which everyone is able to form an opinion, with little need for technical expertise (Mooney 2001). These policies focus on the policy issues tied most closely with personal values or religion. Abortion, same-sex marriage, divorce, euthanasia, school prayer, drug policy, etc. all fall into the category of morality politics.

I chose to focus my attention on morality politics for several reasons. First, morality policies are inherently interesting. They deal with fundamental issues of right and wrong, with fairness and equality, and with our notions of what constitutes the "right" way to live. These policies help dictate some of the most personal aspects of our lives – our childbearing decisions, our sexual relationships, our religious lives, our consciences, and our deaths.

The technical simplicity of morality politics makes morality politics easy for lay persons to understand the basics of the issues, even if some nuances elude them. I could have chosen to focus on economic policy. This policy area is certainly a popular topic now, although the intricacies of economic policy require a greater policy understanding and familiarization with economic theory. For example, should the United States tax capital gains at the same rate as work income? Understanding what impact such a policy shift might make requires a far more sophisticated understanding of economic policy than a decision of whether or not to ensure formal government recognition of same-sex couples. While certainly important, economic policy is more complicated and lacks the spark provided by morality politics.

Social welfare policy would also make a fine area of study. Policy positions related to food stamps, welfare, public education, Medicaid, Social Security, and the like account for a large portion of state and federal budgets. In these tight fiscal times, these programs are increasingly faced with budget shortfalls and drastic cuts. These policies have a direct impact on citizens' lives – vaccination programs for toddlers, public education for children, Medicaid for the impoverished, Medicare and Social Security for

the elderly. However, like economic policy, welfare policy discussions require a significant base of technical understanding. To discuss social welfare policy, one ought to be familiar with what these policies do – and which level of government dictates and implements policy, as well as understand the economic consequences of policy alternatives. A thorough discussion of social welfare policy in state party platforms would be an excellent area to expand at a later date.

Finally, like social welfare and education policy, morality policy battles are often fought most intensely at the state level. Although social conservatives have had moderate success at putting members in Congress and frequently are active in presidential politics, they often feel as though their efforts at changing national policy have produced inadequate results. The GOP has actively sought to frame issues as morality policies, and they have seen some success in evoking a sense of patriotism to garner support for conservative policies, particularly at the state level. Many social conservatives, especially those associated with the Christian right have begun shifting their focus on state-level political change. It is generally easier to change state policy than national policy, especially in states where there are provisions for initiatives and referendums (Wilcox and Robinson 2011). States regulate many of the policy areas dearest to the movement, including school curriculum, restrictions on abortion access, defining marriage,. and these issues have repeatedly shown up on ballots for a public vote. When morality issues make it onto the ballot via initiatives and referendums, the outcomes typically favor conservatives (NCSL 2010).

Understanding Morality Politics

Because morality policies are technically simple, highly salient, and tied closely to core values and understandings of right and wrong, public debates on morality policies are often heated and leave little room for compromise. Unlike economic policies where compromise can simply mean an agreement to split the difference, compromise on morality politics is more complicated. Consider the following example related to the long-standing abortion debate in the United States. Although the policy stances discussed below are simplified for the sake of clarity, the case should help illustrate the difficulty in compromise with regard to morality politics. Consider that for those who maintain the strict belief that human life begins at the moment of conception, any attempt to prevent pregnancy by preventing the implanting of the fertilized egg or any effort to terminate an existing pregnancy may be seen as tantamount to murder. Working under this belief, what might a compromise regarding contraception and abortion laws look like? Those with more moderate views may be able to consider limiting the availability of abortions to the first trimester or an increased focus on reducing the incidence of unwanted pregnancies as an indirect way to limit the demand for abortions an acceptable compromise, but those whose values reflect the aforementioned strict interpretation of life may find such policies intolerable.

Whether or not a set of beliefs are accurate or reasonable is not immediately pertinent to the issue at hand. It is the simple fact that the beliefs are deeply held that makes them of great consequence. Science can distinguish between preventing pregnancy and terminating pregnancy, but has proven unable to conclusively determine

when life begins (whether at fertilization, implantation, the development of a heartbeat, or at viability), much less what the relative value of life means. Other morality policies follow a similar pattern where definitions are often based upon beliefs and values, rather than demonstrable facts, opening the door for intense debate.

Although issues of morality have been salient in society and politics for as long as society has existed, and certainly since the American founding, inclusion of morality policies in national party platforms is relatively new. While issues of morality have always played a central role in American politics – consider slavery and civil rights, women's suffrage and role in society - until the 1970s there was almost no discussion of morality politics in national platforms (Domke and Coe 2008). This has changed and morality politics are routinely addressed in national and state party platforms by both Democrats and Republicans. How morality politics are addressed and the level of attention morality issues receive varies, but we can no longer say they are ignored.

Republicans and the Religion Right

The Republican Party has found significant success in courting the religious right and the division between frequent and occasional churchgoers is a modern realignment (Layman 2001; Putnam and Campbell 2010). The political strength gained by the GOP from their courting of the religious right is not absolute and it is often difficult to assess religious devotion in political leaders – their faith is strategically framed like any other personal characteristic (Green 2007; Jakobsen and Pellegrini 2003; Monson and Oliphant 2007). While the religious right pulled serious weight in the 2004 presidential election, drawing in large sums of contributions and spurring turnout, some

conservative Christian commentators were unsatisfied with the GOP presidential

candidates in 2004 and 2008. In 2008, not only did observers on the right question

McCain's conservative credentials, but McCain himself was less comfortable soliciting

the support of the most conservative Christian leaders. The Democrats are no strangers

to the power of faith, but again, it is not always easy to assess devotion and sincerity.

Despite being a devout Christian, Jimmy Carter did not mention God in his 1980

nomination speech; Bill Clinton invoked God in his 1992 nomination speech, despite

past and future moral controversies (Domke and Coe 2008). It can be difficult to argue

for policy positions contrary to religious teachings, particularly when seeking the

support of the devout. Given Americans' relative devotion to religion, it might seem

surprising that the religious right has not been more successful at changing public policy.

This is attributable, in part, to the small, but ardent libertarian wing of the Republican

Party for resisting GOP effort to overregulate individual behavior. Social conservatives

are also occasionally divided amongst themselves. Some oppose the targeting

mobilization of religious voters, objecting to the politicization of religion – either feeling

that religion should not play center stage in politics or feeling that when religion

becomes too politicized, it becomes vulnerable to political manipulation. We can also

thank the religious right themselves for occasionally shooting themselves in the foot by

going too far for the comfort level of most Americans – devout as they are.

While religion can serve important spiritual and practical purposes, sometimes

the nobility of religion is lost in practice. The preference for tradition and the status quo

in society occasionally results in abhorrent policy positions. Sometimes these failings are

the result of hypocrisy, but many times it is the result of people manipulating religion to cover personal biases. Occasionally catastrophic events like natural disasters can also bring out a darker side of religious leaders. In 2005 Reverend Pat Robertson suggested a link between the tragedies in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina to the issue of abortion rights, and shortly after the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, televangelist Jerry Falwell spoke to his television audience,

> *I really believe that the pagans, and the abortionists, and the feminists, and the gays and lesbians who are actively trying to make that an alternative lifestyle, the ALCU, People for the American way, all of them who have tried to secularize America. I point the finger at them and say, 'You helped this happen'.[98]*

Other times, political leaders allow their personal religious beliefs to steer public policy decisions. In the early 1990's politicians blocked the release of an AIDS pamphlet designed to help teenagers protect themselves from infection because the document advocated the use of condoms (Wilcox and Robinson 2011). The degree to which religion ought to influence public policy remain controversial. It is clear, however, that religion remains a powerful force in American politics.

Expectations for Morality Politics in State Party Platforms

Protecting public morality is an issue typically perceived as being owned by Republicans (Petrocik 1996). As such, we should expect Republican state party platforms to address issues of morality politics more frequently than their Democratic counterparts. Simply identifying which parties address morality policies is not enough. Within the broad category of morality politics, we have two distinct policy tracks –

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[98] On the *700 Club*, on September 13, 2001, Wilcox and Robinson 2011, 8.

conservative and progressive. In order to understand what mentions of morality politics

mean, we must look at whether the policy mentions are supportive of conservative

positions – anti-same-sex marriage, pro-life, or whether the positions are progressive –

pro-same-sex marriage, pro-choice, Given the ideological leanings of state party

platforms covered in chapter 4, I expect Republican platforms to include mostly

conservative morality policy preferences and Democratic state party platforms to

include mostly progressive morality policy preferences.

- Hypothesis 6.1: Republican state party platforms will address morality issues significantly more than Democratic state party platforms.
- Hypothesis 6.2: Mentions of morality politics in Republican state party platforms will emphasize traditional, conservative positions, while mentions of morality politics in Democratic state party platforms will emphasize progressive, liberal positions.

As with platform ideology, the political environment of the state is expected to

influence the morality politics content of state party platforms. Because moral issues are

often more salient to those who perceive a threat, I expect platforms from conservative

states to focus more on morality politics than platforms from liberal states, regardless of

party.

- Hypothesis 6.3: Platforms from conservative states will focus more on morality politics than in liberal states, in both parties.

Because parties need to avoid alienating major segments of state populations in

order to win elections, state parties are expected to behave strategically. In more

conservative states, platforms are expected to embrace fewer liberal morality politics

positions, regardless of party. In more liberal states, platforms of both parties are

expected to include fewer conservative morality politics positions.

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- Hypothesis 6.4: Platforms from conservative states will be less likely to include progressive morality politics mention than platforms from liberal states, regardless of party.
- Hypothesis 6.5: Platforms from liberal state will be less likely to include traditional morality positions than platforms from conservative states, regardless of party.

State ideology is not the only environmental factor expected to influence the treatment of morality politics in state party platforms. The political competitiveness of the state is also expected to have an impact. In more competitive states, platforms are expected to address morality politics more frequently than in less competitive states. Moreover, the difference between conservative and progressive morality politics mentions is expected to be smaller in more competitive states.

I anticipate that party platforms in more competitive states will focus on morality politics more than platforms in less competitive environments. Morality politics are highly salient and in competitive environments it is politically difficult to simply avoid discussing the issues voters care about. In less competitive states political environments, state parties may feel that they have more discretion regarding the issues they must address and those they can disregard.

- Hypothesis 6.6: Platforms from competitive states will address morality politics more frequently than platforms from less competitive states.

While I expect the high salience of morality politics to drive an increase in mentions in more competitive states, I anticipate state party platforms in more competitive states to moderate their positions. In competitive states, I anticipate a smaller difference between traditional and progressive policy stances. In practice this pattern may emerge from party attempts to support a morality politics position, while

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acknowledging and professing respect for those who may feel differently. In less competitive states, I expect this is less need to hedge on these delicate policy positions.

- Hypothesis 6.7: The difference between conservative and progressive morality politics mentions will be smaller in more competitive states.

Results

Hypothesis 6.1 suggests that Republican state party platforms will address morality issues significantly more than Democratic state party platforms and the results support this expectation. On average, Democratic state party platforms dedicate less than four percent of coding units to issues of morality politics compared to the more than 10 percent of the average Republican state party platforms (Figure 18). In only 6 cases do states' Democratic platforms address morality issues more frequently than the states' Republican platforms – Colorado, Florida, Michigan, Vermont, Washington, and Wyoming.

To get a better handle on the partisan differences, I ranked the state party platforms by the percentage of the platforms' coding units dedicated to morality politics. I then separated the platforms into three equal groups representing high, medium, and low morality policy focus. Examining morality policy focus in this manner, the partisan differences are more evident. More than half of Republican state party platforms fall into the highest morality politics concentration, while a majority of Democratic state party platforms fall into the lowest category of morality politic mentions (Table 18). These results clearly demonstrate that state Republican Party platforms are significantly more likely to address religious or moral issues.

More than 40 percent of Democratic state platforms dedicate less than three

percent of their content to morality politics, compared to less than 20 percent of

Republican state party platforms (Figure 18). These results support hypothesis 6.1,

which suggested that Republican state party platforms would address morality policies

	Democrat	Republican
Low MP	51% (19)	19% (8)
Medium MP	41% (15)	28% (12)
High MP	8% (3)	53% (23)
Total	100% (37)	100% (43)
Chi-Squared = 19.86, p < .000		

Table 18: Percent of State Party Platforms and Degree of Focus on Morality Politics, by Party
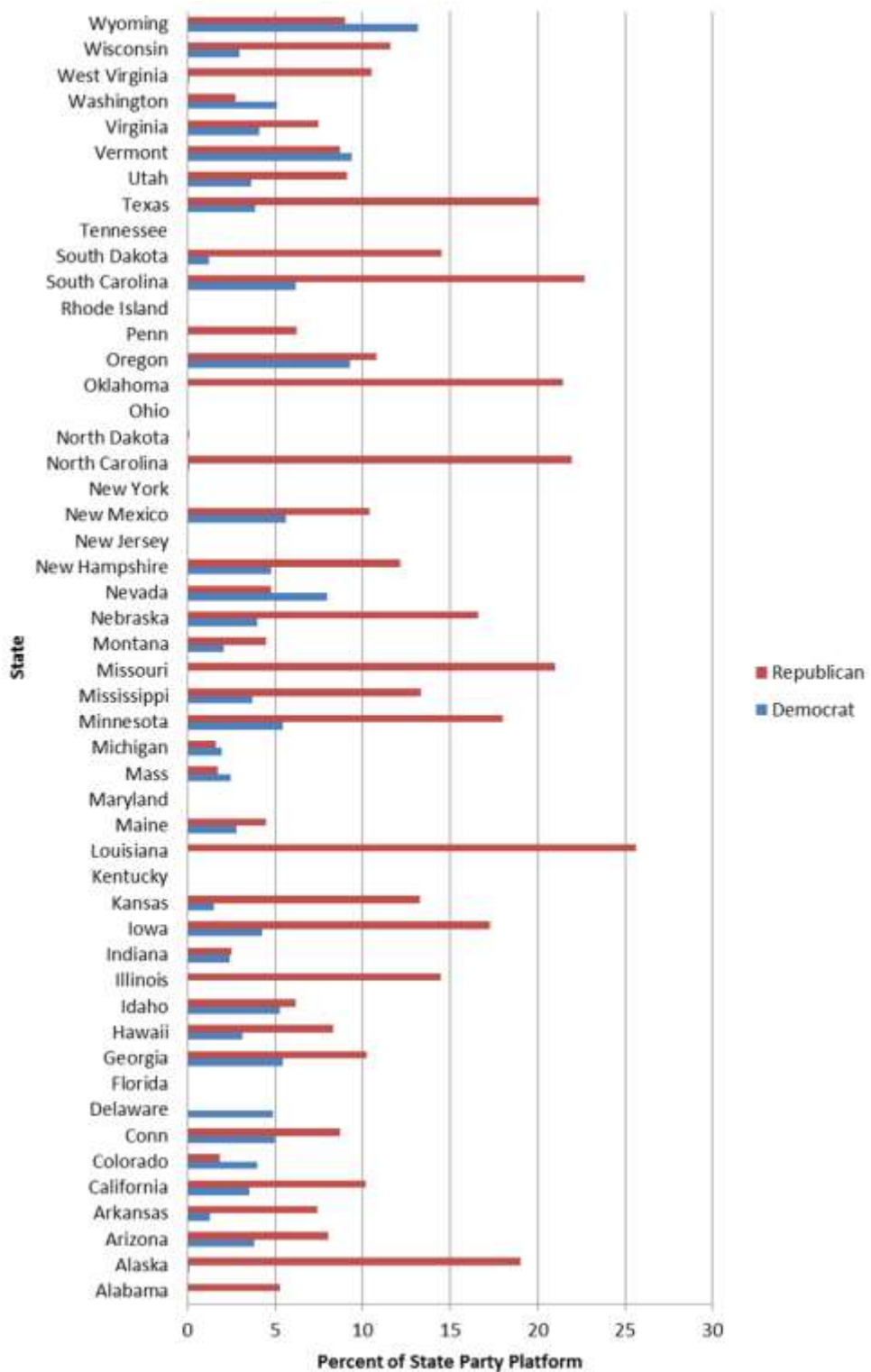
Figure 18: Percent of State Party Platforms Devoted to Morality Politics, by Party

more frequently than Democratic state party platforms. This may be because issues of

morality and religion are generally perceived to be owned by Republicans. It may also be

a reflection of it being more politically advantageous to champion traditional values.

Hypothesis 6.2 predicts that mentions of morality politics in Republican state

party platforms would emphasize traditional, conservative positions, while mentions of

morality politics in Democratic state party platforms would emphasize progressive,

liberal positions. The results support these expectations. Not only do Republican state

party platforms dedicate an average of two and a half times the proportion of coding

units to morality politics that Democratic state parties do, but Republicans focus

overwhelmingly on traditional, conservative moral value positions (Figure 19).
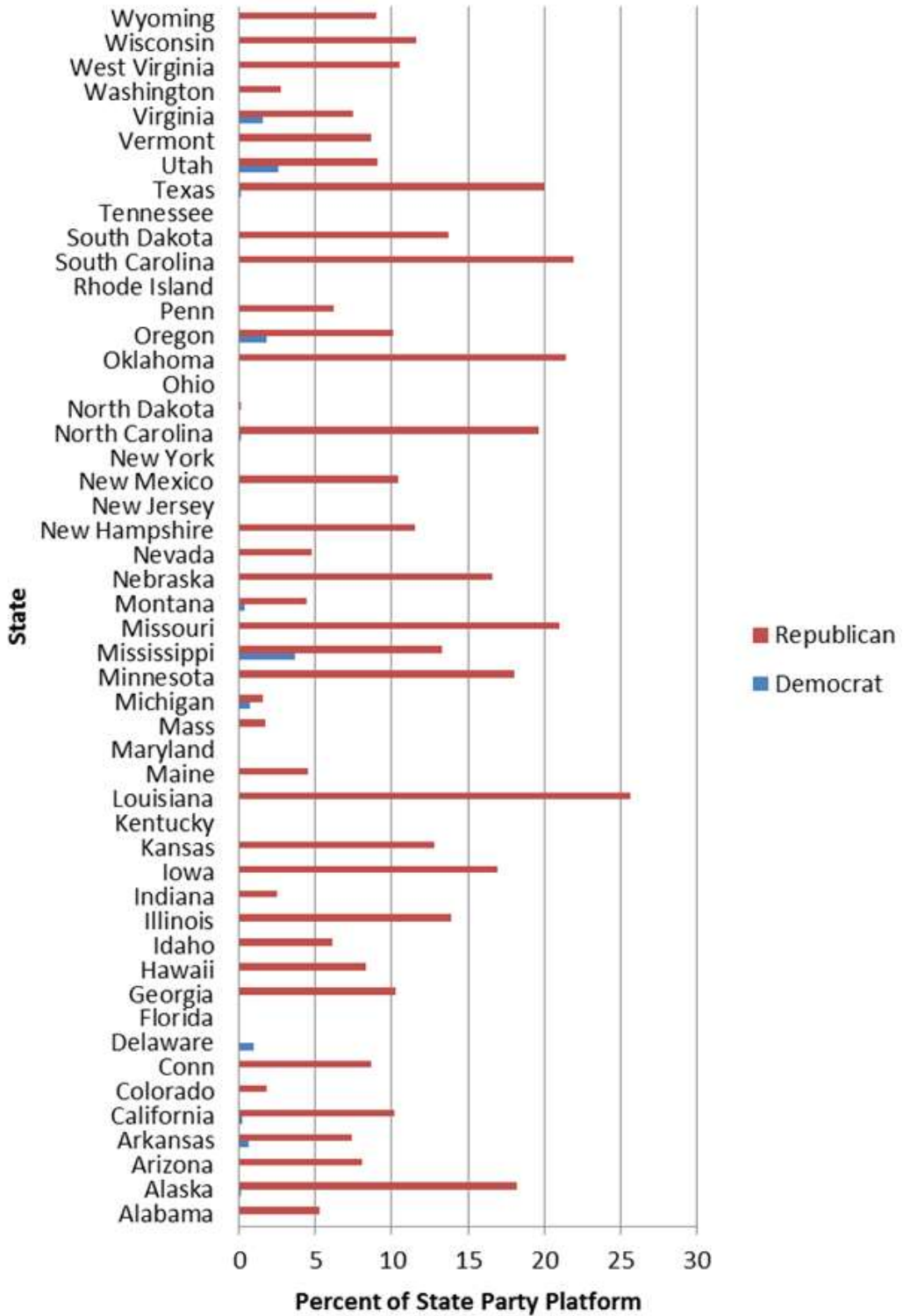
Figure 19: Proportion of State Party Platforms Devoted to Traditional Morality Politics, by Party and State

More than 98 percent of all Republican state party platform mentions of

morality policy are conservative positions (Table 19). Democratic state party platforms

demonstrate a similar, but slightly softer pattern. Mentions of morality policies in

Democratic state party platforms are in support of progressive policies in 91 percent of

cases.

	Democratic	Republican	All
Traditional (603)	0.34%	10.15%	5.61%
Progressive (604)	3.55%	0.17%	1.73%
All Morality Politics (603+604)	3.89 %	10.32%	7.35%

Table 19: Percent of Coding Units in State Party Platforms Devoted to Morality Politics, by Party

Party is not the only variable expected to influence the morality politics content

of state party platforms. Hypothesis 6.3 suggests that party platforms developed in

more conservative states will focus on morality politics more frequently than platforms

developed in more liberal states, for both Democratic and Republican state parties. As

Table 20 indicates, the ideological positioning of the state does not appear to influence

the degree to which state party platforms focus on morality politics. Model 1 backs up

these findings (Table 21). When controlling for party, state ideology has no effect on the

percent of state party platforms dedicated to morality politics.

Consistent with hypothesis 6.4, the proportion of state party platforms

dedicated to progressive morality policy positions increases as states become more

liberal, even when partisanship is accounted for (Table 21, model 2). This means that

progressive morality policy mentions are more frequent in Democratic state party

platforms than in Republican state party platforms, and more common in liberal state

than in more conservative states. While these results may seem intuitive, they are

important because they suggest that the state political environment significantly influences the content of state party platforms. Because state political environments vary dramatically from each other and from national conditions, these findings demonstrate how state parties actively position themselves independent of national party influences.

Democrat and Republican State Party Platforms

	State Ideology		
	Liberal	Moderate	Conservative
Low MP	30% (7)	34% (10)	36% (10)
Medium MP	35% (8)	45% (13)	21% (6)
High MP	35% (8)	21% (6)	43% (12)
Total	*100% (23)*	*100% (29)*	*100% (28)*
Chi-Squared = 4.64, p < .326			

Democratic State Party Platforms

	State Ideology		
	Liberal	Moderate	Conservative
Low MP	40% (4)	50% (7)	62% (8)
Medium MP	40% (4)	50% (7)	31% (4)
High MP	20% (2)	0% (0)	8% (1)
Total	*100% (10)*	*100% (14)*	*100% (12)*
Chi-Squared = 4.02, p < .404			

Republican State Party Platforms

	State Ideology		
	Liberal	Moderate	Conservative
Low MP	23% (3)	20% (3)	13% (2)
Medium MP	31% (4)	40% (6)	13% (2)
High MP	46% (6)	40% (6)	73% (11)
Total	*100% (13)*	*100% (15)*	*100% (15)*
Chi-Squared = 4.09, p < .394			

Table 20: State Ideology and State Party Platform Focus on Morality Politics

Hypothesis 6.5 suggests that platforms from liberal states will be less likely to include traditional morality positions than platforms from conservative states, regardless of party. Not only are references to traditional morality policy positions more common in Republican platforms, model 3 indicates that the proportion of state party

platforms dedicated to traditional morality positions is likely to increase as states

become more conservative, even when controlling for party (Table 21). While state

ideology does not appear to significantly influence the attention paid to morality politics

in general, state ideology does appear to contribute to what types of morality politics

are addressed by state party platforms. As models 2 and 3 indicate, state ideology is a

highly significant predictor of the proportion of state party platforms dedicated to both

traditional and progressive morality positions, even when party is controlled for. Even

when controlling for partisanship, parties in more liberal states dedicate larger

percentages of their platforms to progressive morality positions. Similarly, as states

become more conservative, state party platforms are more likely to devote larger

proportions of their policy statements to traditional morality positions, even when party

is controlled for.

Hypotheses 6.6 and 6.7 suggest that the political competitiveness of a state will

encourage state parties to dedicate a larger percentage of their platforms to morality

politics, and that the difference in focus on traditional versus progressive morality

positions will be smaller in more competitive states. Using a stripped down model, the

results provide no support for hypothesis 6.6 or 6.7. The political competitiveness of the

state does not appear to have any effect on the amount of attention state parties pay to

morality policies (Table 21, model 4). Even when we examine fully specified models, we

can see that partisanship is the primary drive behind the proportion of state party

platforms dedicated to morality policies (Table 21, model 6). Republican state party

platforms tend to devote larger proportions of their platforms to morality politics than

their Democratic counterparts. While the number of coding units is statistically significant, the coefficient is negligible.

Fortunately, I have had better luck identifying the variables that explain relative focus on traditional versus progressive morality policy positions. Using the simplest of models, contrary to hypothesis 6.7, the political competitiveness of a state does not appear to have any effect on the relative focus between traditional and progressive morality policy positions (Table 21, model 5). However, when we examine a fully specified model, we can see that partisanship, state ideology and platform length are all statistically significant (Table 21, model 7). As states become more conservative, they are more likely to shift their focus to traditional morality policy, and, as expected, state Republican Parties are more likely to focus more heavily on traditional morality positions than progressive morality policy. While the effect is modest, as state party platforms become longer, they are more like to emphasize traditional morality over progressive morality positions.

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4[99]	Model 5[100]	Model 6[101]	Model 7[102]
DV:	Percent of Platforms Dedicated to Morality Politics	Percent of Platforms Dedicated to Progressive Morality Positions	Percent of Platforms Dedicated to Traditional Morality Positions	Percent of Platforms Dedicated to Morality Politics	Difference between Traditional and Progressive Morality Politics Mentions	Percent of Platforms Dedicated to Morality Politics	Difference between Traditional and Progressive Morality Politics Mentions
State Ideology	-5.88 (4.83)	4.15 ** (1.74)	-10.02 ** (4.32)			-1.72 (5.49)	-12.45 ** (5.06)
Party	-6.42 *** (1.21)	3.38 *** (0.43)	-9.80 *** (1.08)	-6.22 *** (1.27)	-13.15 *** (1.24)	-6.86 *** (1.28)	-13.84 *** (1.18)
District Competitiveness				0.03 (0.055)	0.01 (0.05)	0.01 (0.56)	-0.02 (0.05)
Population Density						-0.01 (0.00)	-0.00 (0.00)
Coding Units						0.00 * (0.00)	0.01 ** (.003)
Region C						-0.15 (0.27)	-0.11 (0.25)
Constant	21.09 ** (8.90)	-7.43 ** (3.20)	28.52 *** (7.95)	9.02 *** (2.47)	9.75 *** (2.41)	13.84 (9.89)	33.17 *** (9.12)
Adjusted R^2	.260	.448	.521	.249	.606	.273	.659
N	80	80	80	80	80	80	80

* p < .10; ** p < .05; *** p < .01

Table 21: Predicting Patterns of Morality Politics in State Party Platforms

[99] Model 4 was also run substituting Ranney's folded measure of state political competitiveness. The results did not change.

[100] Model 5 was also run substituting Ranney's folded measure of state political competitiveness. When Ranney's index was used, state political competitiveness reaches statistical significance (p < .05).

[101] Model 6 was also run substituting Ranney's folded measure of state political competitiveness. The results did not change.

[102] Model 7 was also run substituting Ranney's folded measure of state political competitiveness. The results did not change.

Discussion

Examining the 80 state party platforms together, the rate of morality policy references is fairly even distributed across the scale. However, when party, state ideology, and state political competitiveness are taken into account, clearer patterns emerge. Republican state parties in more conservative states tend to dedicate larger proportions of their platforms to morality politics- particularly traditional morality positions. When Democratic state party platforms address morality politics, they tend to devote larger portions of their platforms to progressive morality positions, especially in states with more liberal state ideologies. If we look at the balance of morality politics between traditional and progressive positions, partisanship and state ideology are the driving forces. Interestingly, contrary to expectations, the political competitiveness of the state does not appear to have any effect on either the attention given to morality policies generally, or the relative focus on traditional versus progressive policies.

Although these findings help us better understand how a state's political environment may influence the content of state party platforms, a purely numerical discussion ignores more nuanced differences that are difficult to quantify. Just as the wording and style of platforms influence their length, style and language choices significantly shape their content. Only by carefully reviewing the full text of state party platforms do we see some of these patterns. Sometimes what is most interesting is not which issues are addressed, but how the issues are spoken of. For example the national Democratic Party platform takes a clear position on abortion rights, while declaring

support for programs that would reduce unwanted pregnancies and make it easier for

women to raise children:

> *The Democratic Party strongly and unequivocally supports Roe v.*
> *Wade and a woman's right to choose a safe and legal abortion,*
> *regardless of ability to pay, and we oppose any and all efforts to weaken*
> *or undermine that right. The Democratic Party also strongly supports*
> *access to comprehensive affordable family planning services and age-*
> *appropriate sex education which empower people to make informed*
> *choices and live healthy lives. We also recognize that such health care and*
> *education help reduce the number of unintended pregnancies and thereby*
> *also reduce the need for abortions. The Democratic Party also strongly*
> *supports a woman's decision to have a child by ensuring access to and*
> *availability of programs for pre- and post-natal health care, parenting*
> *skills, income support, and caring adoption programs.*

The states vary significantly on how they address the abortion issue, even within

the Democratic Party. California Democrats opt for a strong, unambiguous position:

> *…Preserve confidential, unrestricted access to affordable, high*
> *quality, culturally sensitive health care services, including the full range of*
> *reproductive services, contraception and abortion, without requiring*
> *guardian, judicial, parental, or spousal consent or notification.*[103]

Democrats in Nebraska take a more cautious approach to abortion rights,

> *We support the continuation of Title X funding for family*
> *planning…. the right of patients who rely on federally funded services to*
> *receive comprehensive medical information in order to make informed*
> *decisions regarding their medical treatment.*[104]

Hawaii Democrats opt for a less-is-more approach, "We support equal access to

fundamental rights including but not limited to marriage, privacy, and a woman's right

to choose."[105]

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[103] 2010 California State Democratic Platform.
[104] 2010 Nebraska State Democratic Platform.
[105] 2010 Hawaii State Democratic Platform.

Michigan Democrats seek to walk the line between supporting a core pillar of

contemporary liberalism, and not ostracizing fellow partisans who hold a more

conservative position, producing a platform that tip toes around a hot button issue:

> *We believe that women should have access to reproductive medical services and professional advice when they need it. We pledge our support for reproductive freedom, giving a woman the right to make her own choices in this matter. But we respect the individual conscience of each American on this difficult issue. We strongly support family planning, child care, and adoption programs such as those in Governor Granholm's pregnancy reduction initiative.[106]*

The examples above highlight the variations seen in Democratic state party

platforms regarding abortion, although Republican state party platforms also contain

some variation on this issue. In the case of Republican state party platforms, the

variation is more limited and the degree to which the states parties vary is more a case

of emphasis, rather than policy. Some Republican state party platforms do not address

the issue at all, while others provide only a simple statement declaring their belief in

"life begins at conception." When Republican state party platforms discuss abortion in

any length, the positions are unanimously staunchly conservative:

> *Recognizing that abortion is grievously harmful to women, men, families, and society at large, as well as fatal to the unborn child, we support and strongly encourage positive alternatives to abortion, such as adoption.[107]*

> *Action should be taken leading to legislative guarantees and protection of the father's inalienable right to decide against any unilateral or preemptive decision to terminate his child's developing life.[108]*

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[106] 2010 Michigan State Democratic Platform.
[107] 2008 Louisiana State Republican Platform.
[108] 2010 Minnesota State Republican Platform.

In general, when state Democratic platforms include support for traditional

moral and religious norms, they generally opted to do so in very vague terms. Rather

than indicating specific positions on morality issues or religious matters, Democratic

platforms opted for broad supportive statements, "While partisan rhetoric seeks to

separate, we Democrats believe strongly in our faith and are guided by our values"[109]

and "(We) recognize the unique historic role faith has played in our community

development and heritage. We recognize the importance that faith continues to play in

the lives of Utah Democrats and all Utahns."[110] In addition, while support for traditional

moral and traditional religious policies are scarce in state Democratic platforms, this

rarity does not indicate a radically liberal position on sensitive social issues. In fact, state

parties frequently avoid taking official stands on many morality issues.

Conclusion

Despite the emphasis on separation and individualism, the American psyche is

deeply engrained with the idea that the US is a nation favored by God. This serves as a

founding mythology, but often leads to a sense of self-righteousness (Domke and Coe

2008). Government has the capacity to harm religion and individual freedom; however,

the danger of religious entrenchment in the public sphere is that it is difficult to argue

with the notion of an omnipotent and infallible God. It is not just the religious minorities

and secularists who must take heed of the perils of faith in public policy, but also those

of majority faith (Ward and Calhoun-Brown 2007). If we are to implement God's

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[109] 2010 Virginia State Democratic Platform.
[110] 2010 Utah State Democratic Platform.

message as law, which interpretation shall we abide by – Catholic or Protestant, Methodist or Southern Baptist? Moreover, "If religion can take center stage in politics, what is keeping politics out of religion?" (Heschel 2004, 122)

It is too easy to paint all Christians, all evangelicals, all persons of faith with one brushstroke. To insinuate that all evangelicals hold consistent public policy beliefs, much less all Christians, is disingenuous and inaccurate. Religion and public policy is a delicate equilibrium today, just as it was 200 years ago. We must find a way to balance the religious freedoms of some with the beliefs of others. That individuals' sense of morality varies even among those who share a common faith makes government enforcement of virtue more contentious.

It is a delicate balance we seek to strike between conflicting sets of values. As an elegant solution is unlikely to present itself, we are left to muddle through. State party platforms highlight how this struggle plays out in state parties as divergent interests fight to represent their values as those of the parties'. What we see in the end is a compromise that is frequently at odds with substantial portions of the state party, the state parties of their neighbors, as well as their national counterparts.

While it is unclear how we might best achieve a virtuous society, this examination of state party platforms produces several unambiguous lessons. Despite conditions that prioritize economic issues, morality politics remain highly salient in American politics. The high salience and technical simplicity of morality politics drives public fascination with morality politics, it is important to recognize that these issues are also deeply personal. They deal with issues of marriage and sexuality, faith and personal

autonomy. Morality politics, in some respects, is society's way of legislating a perspective of virtue and history suggests that no degree of economic turbulence or foreign policy entanglements will diminish the significance of these issues.

Partisanship in the United States is a messy affair. While we are engrossed in the national spectacle, real action and meaningful variation exists in the states. Oklahoma Republicans and Massachusetts Republicans produce platforms that could easily be mistaken for opposing parties. While the national Republican Platform speaks bluntly about morality politics and presents robust conservative positions, Massachusetts Republicans take a more balanced approach.

While the national party platforms are the documents that receive the most public attention when they are released during the presidential nominating conventions every four years, state parties across the country draft and revise state party platform every 2-4 years. The documents produced by the state parties are not flawless reflections of the national party platforms. The common perception of Democrats and Republicans as soldiers of the national parties is inaccurate and misleading. To speak of the Democratic and Republican parties as homogeneous ignores the vast degrees of dissimilarity visible in the state party platforms. We do not have two national political parties headquartered in DC, but 102 parties scattered across the county with every immeasurable degree of variation. Parties vary ideologically, in professionalism, in activity, and their treatment of morality politics.

> *Decentralization constitutes the most important single fact concerning the American parties. He who understands this fact, and knows nothing else, knows more about American parties than he who knows everything except this fact.*[111]

Review of Findings

Chapter 4

In some respects, state party platforms look exactly as we would expect them to. Unsurprisingly, Democratic state party platforms are longer and more liberal than Republican state party platforms. The conservative preference for smaller government does appear to translate frequently into briefer state party platforms, although this tendency should not be overstated. The Republican state party platform from Texas is a perfect counter example. Although Texas Republicans are big advocates for smaller government, decentralization, and individual liberty, their platform was the fifth longest out of all 80 in this sample.

As expected, Democratic state party platforms are more liberal than their Republican counterparts. More interestingly, state parties in liberal states tend to position their platforms further left on the ideological spectrum than parties in more conservative states. This finding holds for both Democratic and Republican state parties. In more liberal states, both the state Democratic and the state Republican parties

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[111] EE Schattschneider 1942, 131.

produce more liberal platforms than parties in more conservative states. The political ideology of the state influences the state parties and the distribution and the median voter varies across states. This finding underscores the variation in the behavior and policy preferences of state parties, as well as the impact of local political conditions which serve to distance state parties from their national brethren.

Not all of my predictions were supported. Contrary to expectations, there is more ideological variation in Republican state party platforms than Democratic state party platforms. I expected Democratic state party platforms to produce a greater ideological variety of platforms, given their diverse constituencies and the general populations' distaste of the liberal label. The diversity seen in state Republican parties may help us understand how Republicans are able to win control of a majority of state legislatures and gubernatorial positions in spite of the national party's increasingly narrow constituencies. While the national Republican Party becomes more homogeneous, more rigid, the state Republican parties are more flexible and responsive to the state political environment.

Furthermore, the political competitiveness of the state does not appear to influence how closely state party platforms align ideologically with their national counterparts. I anticipated state party platforms in politically competitive states to parallel national party platforms. The political competitiveness of a state may influence other elements of state party behavior, but the ideology of state party platforms or their ideological distance from the national party does not appear to be effected. It may be that alignment with national parties which are not particularly popular may not help

parties succeed at the state level. When national parties, and national leaders, are viewed as out of touch, they may be more of a liability in state races. It may also be that the state parties do not approach platform writing with any intent to use their position relative to the national party in any strategic way. State party platforms may simply be drafted to reflect the dominant views of state party members, regardless of national patterns. That national and state platforms frequently align may simply be an artifact of shared interests, rather than any strategic development.

Chapter 5

Consistent with issue ownership theory, Democratic state party platforms emphasize Democratic owned issues, and focus less on Republican owned issues. Republican state party platforms behave similarly, preferring to focus on issues owned by Republicans more frequently than issues owned by Democrats. These findings are consistent with my expectations and previous issue ownership research.

Given of the salience of the economy during the 2008-10 election cycle, I expected performance issues (including the economy) to account for a substantial portion of state party platforms. The results are consistent with my expectations; performance issues accounted for a significant portion of state party platform content, particularly for the Democrats. Democratic state party platforms addressed performance issues are more than twice the rate as they addressed Republican owned issues. Interestingly, Republican state party platforms addressed performance issues and Democratic owned issues at nearly the same rate (Figure 14).

Previous research testing issue ownership theory at the national level consistently finds that Republicans have an innate advantage because the issues most salient in national elections are owned by Republican. As a result, Democrats feel compelled to trespass onto Republican owned issues and Republicans focus on their owned issues more consistently. At the state level, these findings are reversed. Democratic state party platforms focus on issues their party owns more consistently than their Republican brethren. Unlike their national counterparts, state Republican parties are more likely to trespass onto Democratic owned issues. Seeing Democrats adhere to issue ownership expectations more consistently in the states, while Republicans are more consistent nationally highlights the importance of understanding how political parties behave beyond the national stage. The political conditions and the environmental pressures in the states vary, resulting in varied behavioral patterns. This intriguing finding may be the result of varying saliencies at the national and state levels. The issues most salient at the national level are typically owned by Republicans, while the issue areas states are most involved in are owned by the Democrats. If the results hold over time we will have a better understanding of how and why state political parties diverge from their national counterparts.

Chapter 6

As anticipated, Republican state party platforms emphasis traditional moral policy positions like opposition to same-sex marriage, condemnation of abortion access, and defense of abstinence before marriage. Likewise, Democratic state party platforms

emphasized progressive morality policy positions like widespread access to contraception, medical privacy rights, and opposition to sexual orientation discrimination. In addition, I find that state Republicans from more conservative states dedicate larger portions of their platforms to morality politics than their Democratic counterparts or their Republican colleagues in more liberal states. Not only are the patterns of morality politics influenced by partisan labels, but the ideological climate of the state influences party behavior.

Some of the most remarkable patterns seen in the treatment of morality politics are not related to the amount of space dedicated to these issues, but rather the way in which the issues are discussed. Democratic state party platforms are significantly more likely to carefully balance their progressive policy preferences with conservative party interests. Even where Democratic platforms clearly express support for abortion rights, the supportive stance frequently occurs alongside a statement acknowledging those who believe differently and expressing respect for diverse views. In contrast, Republican state party platforms are more likely to express strong, unambiguous policy stances, without hedging. These patterns highlight intra-party divisions and ideological variation among the Democrats that are not apparent in state Republican parties.

Limitations and Future Research

Previous analyses of party platforms have focused on the national party platforms and neglected state party platforms almost entirely. The existing research on state party platforms is similarly inadequate due to a narrow focus on platform

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ideology. This study is a first step towards a better understanding of the behavior and roles played by state political parties in the United States. By building upon the successful coding system developed by the Comparative Manifesto Project researchers, I am able to provide a more explicit description of state party platforms than previous researchers. Even with this advance, more work remains to be done. Future research can build upon this work to investigate the behavior of state parties over time, examine the language used in state party platforms for insight into the parties' policy positions, assess the relationship between state parties and campaigns, and test the impact of state party platforms on institutions and policy outcomes.

State Party Platforms Over Time

This analysis should be expanded to examine state party platforms over time. While this analysis is unique in its depth, going beyond simple measures of ideology, and the conclusions drawn are compelling, it is only a snapshot. When examining state party platforms over time, researchers will be able to ascertain how state party platforms change over time in response to electoral wins or losses, and the degree to which public opinion trends prompt state parties to add, remove, or rephrase platform language. There is evidence that platforms reflect the true values of party activists and tracing the reactions of state parties to negative public feedback regarding specific policy planks would be a valuable step forward in our understanding of state party behavior. When faced with public opposition, will the parties remain true to their values, despite public dissent, or will they buckle under public pressure and alter the unpopular planks? When

the political environment of the state changes, do state parties simply drop the offending planks, taking no official position, as Arkansas Democrats did in 2006?

Analysis over time will also provide insight into the degree that national party platforms draw inspiration from their state counterparts, and vice versa. As state parties shift their issue focus and alter their policy positions, do the national parties seek to accommodate these changes? Over time, do the platforms of state parties fall in line with national party platforms, or does the inconsistency remain? I will be able to address these questions with a dataset expanded over time.

The Language of State Party Platforms

While this project digs deeper into state party platforms than existing studies that rely on simple ideological measures, more can be done. My analysis helps us understand the parties' relative focus on issue areas at the state and national levels, helping to uncover the degree to which state parties behave independently of their national counterparts. In a similar vein, language analysis would allow us to better compare state platforms to national platforms to see the degree to which they profess consistent policy preferences.

To understand the frequency with which state parties focus on social welfare issues is an important step. Political speech - in stump speeches, campaign advertisements, and party platforms – often relies on vague statements with few substantive policy details. Generic calls to improve public education, reduce corruption in government, and defend the national borders are common in party platforms.

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However, specific details on how to accomplish these laudable goals are far less common. When state parties offer more specific suggestions, we can see that there is a broad range of policy preferences among the states. Future research should attempt to ascertain the degree to which state parties operating under Democratic and Republican labels express support for common policies.

Party Platforms and Political Campaigns

Although Americans typically are portrayed as woefully uninformed and politically disengaged, there is evidence that party platforms can help citizens better understand what the parties stand for. While members of the general public rarely consult party platforms directly, it appears that campaigns focus on issues and themes consistent with platforms. Further analysis would allow us to compare the focus and content of platforms to the issues addressed most often and the specific policy positions offered by state candidates in speeches, campaign advertisements, and legislative proposals once in office. These results would assist researchers in tying state party behavior to the behavior of individual candidates.

Party Platforms and Institutional Behavior

Previous research suggests that national party platforms can help predict the policy behavior of successful presidential candidates, more so than Congressional candidates. In some ways, this is not surprising. Because there is only one executive candidate for office, they should be able to push for a singular, consistent ideology in the national platform. Congressional candidates on the other hand are numerous and

often hold contradictory policy preferences. At a minimum, Congressional candidates

are going to disagree on which issue areas they want to emphasize most, given their

diverse constituencies. We could use state party platforms to better understand the

behavior of state officials during campaigns and in office. Does the same pattern of

executive over legislative consistency exist at the state level as well? That is, are

legislators or state executive officers more consistent with state party platforms?

Governors and state legislators are not the only public officials in the states

whose behavior could be better understood in relation to party values. Some states use

popular elections to select state-level judges. Although judges are guided by the law,

our legal structure leaves ample room for outside forces to influence judicial behavior.

Researchers could use state party platforms to identify patterns of partisan behavior in

state judges, elected in partisan and non-partisan elections.

Morality Politics

I chose to focus my analysis on morality policies because they are highly salient,

technically simple, and deal with our core values as individuals and society. My analysis

provides the most thorough examinations of morality policies in state party platforms,

but much work remains. My analysis is among the first to distinguish between

traditional and progressive emphases of morality policies in state party platforms.

Knowing that some Republican state parties dedicate large proportions of their

platforms to traditional moral policies while others only mention such policies in passing

is a valuable finding. The salience of issues tells us a great deal, but the degree to which

state parties are willing to stake out unambiguous policy positions can enhance our understanding of state parties, in relation to one another and in relation to their national counterparts. The deeper analysis I recommend for morality policies would be equally valuable if applied to social welfare policies or even economic policy.

A more precise analysis of the language used in state party platforms would help us understand policy consistency between state parties and future research should attempt to distinguish between strong and weak policy positions. If we were to develop a system for placing each policy position on a continuum from extreme conservative to extreme liberal, we would have a better understanding of the true policy positions of state parties. This analysis takes only the first step towards this type of comprehensive understanding by uncovering the attention state parties devote to traditional and progressive morality policies.

Conclusion

My findings underscore the need to expand our assessments of party politics in America to better incorporate the significance of state political parties. While the parties reflect their national counterparts in the broad strokes, there is meaningful variation between state and national parties, and the state parties vary significantly from one another. Despite the strength of our two-party system and the inability of third parties to break through, our party system is characterized by dramatic decentralization and considerably inconsistencies. I hope that this analysis can serve as a blueprint for further

and more extensive research on state political parties and their impact on American

politics.

The coding unit in any given program is the 'quasi-sentence,' defined as an argument. An argument is the verbal expression of one political idea or issue. In its simplest form, a sentence is the basic unit of meaning. Therefore, punctuation is used as the most important guideline for identifying arguments. In its shortest form, a sentence contains a subject, a verb, and an attribute or adjective:

We want worldwide peace.

We will reduce our military forces.

Obviously, these two sentences contain two different arguments which are easy to identify and to distinguish. But unfortunately, languages are more complex, and it is a question of style how to express the same political ideas:

We want worldwide peace and will reduce our military forces.

In this case, the two statements are combined into one sentence but for our purposes they should be still treated as two different arguments.

A list of arguments, sometimes marked with hyphens or dots, is treated as if separated by full stops:

In international policy we shall take new initiatives. We will:
- o *promote peace;*
- o *ban chemical weapons;*
- o *begin discussions for the removal of nuclear bases;*
- o *increase aid to developing countries;*
- o *take action to protect the status of refugees.*

"Now a new historical period has begun – a period in which Russia should be cleansed from obscurantism and evil foreign and inner forces, a period of its revival as a great superpower, strong and peaceful, and democratic, free and prosperous, setting the whole world an example of real civilization and strong spirituality."(Russia, LDPR 2003).

At first sight, this sentence seems to contain arguments about peace, democracy, freedom, prosperity and various others. However, the overall argument here is patriotism. Accordingly, this sentence is not cut up.

Decision Rule No 1: Identifying Quasi- Sentences

1. Copy the respective party program into the left column of a table with 2 columns, leave the right column for the codings (see section 5). Then, 2. start with reading the first paragraph, 3. look at each sentence of the first paragraph, 4. identify the number of arguments and transform them into (quasi-)sentences, and 5. mark all (quasi-)sentences in the first paragraph as shown in sample texts in section 5. Always think twice before you cut a sentence into several quasi-sentences. Always read the sentence again and consider whether there is a comprehensive argument that catches the meaning of those aspects that could be considered separately.

Some parts of the manifesto, like statistics, tables of content and section headings are not considered as text to be coded and, therefore, do not count as quasi-sentences. Introductory remarks by party leaders are equally ignored since the ideal-type of a manifesto is defined as authoritative statements of parties. All the other parts of a manifesto constitute the basis of analysis. The total number of units of analysis equals the total number of quasi-sentences identified for the relevant text of a given manifesto.

Decision Rule No 2: Classifying the Quasi-Sentences

Read the whole of the first paragraph before you start coding the first quasi-sentence because the context may give you hints how to code an otherwise ambiguous argument. Look to see whether one of the 56 categories definitely captures the sense of the first identified quasi-sentence and note down the respective number of the category in the right column of the table or at the margin of the page. Repeat this procedure for all the quasi-sentences of the first paragraph. Then proceed with the next paragraph by repeating step no 1.

To prevent unitising mistakes, *Commandment No. 1 spells out that whenever coding units are in doubt, the respective sentence must be coded twice, in two logically different rounds, and the two solutions for unitising have to be cross-checked before a final decision is taken on breaking up a sentence into quasi-sentences*. In a first round, coders should choose one code for the overarching preference of the whole sentence and finish the coding of all the sentences of the whole paragraph or section. In the second round, a separate row of codes for the quasi-sentences will be added. The inference from both rows of codes should then be compared to the qualitative arguments. For example, let us suppose that a sentence-based coding of a paragraph or section produces 6 codes, 3 for welfare state expansion and 3 for environmental protection, whereas a quasi-sentence-based coding of the same paragraph or section produces 12 codes with 3 for welfare state expansion and 9 for environmental protection. The sentence-based coding paints the picture of a party that is equally in favour of welfare and environment, whereas the quasi-sentence-based coding leaves the impression of a party overwhelmingly concerned with the environment. These different impressions can then be compared to the arguments given in the whole

section. The quantitative codes should give a balanced view; they should 'mirror' the qualitative arguments as far as possible.

a. No category seems to apply

The coding frame was created to capture the total manifesto content. Nonetheless, it may be that no category is available for a particular problem in a particular country. These quasi-sentences are treated as uncodable (000). It is important to realize that 'uncoded' does not necessarily mean that a sentence is devoid of meaning (although of course it may be); only that it cannot be fitted into the present coding frame. However, *Commandment No. 2 is that sentences should be coded if at all possible.* To follow this there are a number of specific decision rules on how to tackle with difficult coding decisions.

In many countries some of the categories are not much used (for instance (405) 'Corporatism' and (409) 'Keynesian Demand Management'), but are vital for comparative reasons. Therefore, some categories may be left empty at the end of the coding procedure. On the other hand seldom used categories are the most difficult to handle.

Decision Rule No 4: Checking Definitions of all Categories in Policy Domains

Whenever tempted to treat a quasi-sentence as uncodable, read the definitions of categories in the relevant policy domains once again because it might well be that the quasi-sentence contains a policy position that is taken only seldom. Therefore, the specific definition of the respective category may just have been forgotten.

A quasi-sentence may be without meaning but may nevertheless be part of the

discussion of a problem and have a stylistic or linking function, for example:

> *'The next government will do everything in its power to defend the interests of the farmers. To this end, we envisage several measures.*
> *Firstly, we will increase payments of all kinds to farmers. ...'*

These are three quasi-sentences. The middle sentence itself is devoid of any

policy-content but is a part of the same argument. Therefore, category (703)

'Agriculture' is coded three times.

Decision Rule No 5: Identifying Connecting Sentences

> *Some sentences, which may otherwise be uncodable, may just be connecting sentences between two arguments (for instance: Therefore, we are going to do three things.) These connecting sentences themselves do not constitute meaningful arguments but are part of an ongoing argument. Therefore, connecting sentences should be coded in the same category as surrounding sentences or as the bulk of the paragraph they appear in.*

Because of the general commandment to classify quasi-sentences if at all

possible, all quasi-sentences treated as uncodable must be checked again after coding

the total program.

b. More than one category seems to apply

The opposite difficulty arises if more than one category seems to apply. The

Standard Classification Scheme was developed to cover the whole content of election

programs. Election programs do not only mention policy preferences, but also include

preferences about the polity and the politics of the country. The term 'polity' refers to

the institutional dimension of political systems, covering all political institutions such as

electoral rules and principles of decision making as well as the organisations of interest

intermediation and governance. The term 'politics' refers to all processes of interest

intermediation and governance. A classification scheme covering the whole content of

national election programs should also allow for coding these polity and politics

preferences. Some categories such as (203) 'Constitutionalism: Positive' and (204)

'Constitutionalism: Negative' address the polity, others such as (303) 'Governmental and

Administrative Efficiency: Positive' address politics, still others such as (301)

'Decentralisation: Positive' and (302) 'Centralisation: Positive' include polity, politics, as

well as policy issues.

The problem of multiple coding solutions occurs when polity, politics, and/or

policy arguments are combined into one sentence:

'Because we want worldwide peace, we will add this goal to our constitution.'

In this case, the polity is merely a means to achieve a policy goal. This difficulty

can be dealt with by applying the following decision rules:

Decision Rule No 6: Policy Goals "Beat" Politics, Polity, and Policy Means

Whenever a sentence combines the means with the achievement of a policy goal, the policy goal is to be chosen.

These general decision rules often apply to the following specific choices:

Decision Rule No 7: Specific Policy Positions "Beat" (303) 'Efficiency'

Whenever there is a choice between category (303) 'Governmental and Administrative Efficiency: Positive', defined as the need for efficiency and economy in government and administration, and

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another policy category from Domains 1 to 7, the specific policy position is to be chosen.

Decision Rule No 8: Specific Policy Positions 'Beat' (305) 'Political Authority'

Whenever there is a choice between category (305) 'Political Authority', defined as the party's general competence to govern or the general critique of opponent parties' com-petence, on the one hand and another category from Policy Domains 1 to 7, the specific policy position is to be chosen.

And example for the rule that policy goals beat policy means is provided by the following sentence:

"We will achieve world wide peace by disarmament."

The argument in this sentence is 'Peace' (106), not 'Military Negative' (105). The problem of choosing between two categories also occurs with respect to group politics, for instance: 'We want more social security for workers'. In this case, category (701) 'Labour Groups' or category (504) 'Welfare State Expansion' may apply.

Decision Rule No 9: Specific Policy Positions 'Beat' Group Politics except Group (703) 'Agriculture'

Whenever there is a choice between a specific policy position given in Policy Domains 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, or 6 on the one hand and a social group from Domain 7 on the other hand, take the specific policy position. This rule does not apply to category (703) 'Agriculture'. All quasi-sentences devoted to agriculture are to be coded into category 703, even if a specific policy position such as (402) 'Incentives' or (410) 'Economic Growth' is taken to further the interests of farmers. Whenever agriculture is positively mentioned, code 703 has to be used.

In addition to the aforementioned cases of choice, there is one category, (408) 'General Economic Goals', which is non-positional and should, therefore, be avoided if possible.

Decision Rule No 10: Specific Policy Positions 'Beat' (408) 'General Economic Goals'

> *Whenever there is a choice between a more specific policy position given in Policy Domains 1 to 7 and category (408) 'General Economic Goals', the specific policy positions (for instance (410) 'Economic Growth') is to be chosen instead of 408.*

Even after applying these decision rules, one may still not be sure where an argument is leading. In many cases, section headings can be used to make a decision:

Decision Rule No 11: Section Headings as Guidelines

> *Look at the section heading of the quasi-sentence in question. Then, take the category which covers the topic of the section or the heading. Thus, section headings are taken as guidelines for coding although section headings themselves are not to be coded.*

Many of these problems may be solved by taking the context of the ambiguous quasi-sentence into account. Coders should first of all study the sentences that follow because the first quasi-sentence may be part of an argument explicated in the next sentences. Therefore, it is always useful to start the coding procedure by reading the whole paragraph.

For all other cases in which more than one category seems to apply, the coder has to decide what the most important concern of the argument is since one, and only

one, category has to be chosen for each argument. There is only one exception to the 'one-and only one' rule:

Decision Rule No 12: European Level and National Level

Policies at the European level may be discussed with respect to their impact at the national level. In these cases, (108) 'European Community: positive' or (110) 'European Community: negative' as well as the specific national position in Policy Domains 2 to 7 have to be coded.

Just as with unitising (see p. 8), scoring problems often occur with the introductory parts and the summary of long programs as well as with short programs. In both cases, many arguments are typically condensed into very few sentences, often containing numerous commas and semicolons. In case of such difficulties, the rest of the manifesto should be coded before the introductory part is tackled as this will give hints on how to solve the riddles of the introductory sentences.

In case of very short programs with just one to five pages, unitising and scoring decisions concerning a few sentences can change the result of the content analysis. Therefore, the following decision rule should be applied:

Decision Rule No 13: Double-check each Code Chosen for Short Manifestos

Short manifestos have to be coded twice because each coding decision is particularly crucial. In case of short programs, make sure that no argument is neglected due to deci-sion rules 6 to 10. Make sure that the numerical coding solution mirrors all qualitative arguments given in such short programs, even if they are hidden in subordinate clauses

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c. The statement seems unclear

Even after applying Decision Rules No 1 to 13, one may still not be sure where an argument is leading. Many of these problems may be solved by taking the context of the ambiguous quasi-sentence into account. Coders should first of all take into account the following sentences because the first (quasi-) sentence may be part of an argument which is explicated in the next sentences. Therefore, it is always useful to start the coding procedure by reading the whole paragraph.

In some cases, crucial decisions have to be made with respect to the manifest or latent content of statements. No inferences should be made with respect to the meaning of statements. The coder has to code what the statement says, not what he or she thinks it may lead to in the end. Thus, if a party claims that a measure favours employees, (701) 'Labour Groups: Positive' has to be coded although you may feel sure that it is to their detriment.

As with uncodable sentences, all unclear statements should be marked and reread at the end of coding. The reason is that many statements which may be uncodable at first sight may become clear in the context of the whole program.

Policy Domain 1: External Relations

101   Foreign Special Relationships: Positive

Favourable mentions of particular countries with which the manifesto country

has a special relationship. For example, in the British case: former colonies; in the

Swedish case: the rest of Scandinavia; the need for co-operation with and/or aid to such

countries.

102   Foreign Special Relationships: Negative

Negative mentions of particular countries with which the manifesto country has

a special relationship; otherwise as 101, but negative.

103   Anti-Imperialism

Negative references to exerting strong influence (political, military or

commercial) over other states; negative references to controlling other countries as if

they were part of an empire; favourable mentions of de-colonisation; favourable

references to greater self-government and independence for colonies; negative

references to the imperial behaviour of the manifesto and/or other countries.

104   Military: Positive

Need to maintain or increase military expenditure; modernising armed forces

and improvement in military strength; rearmament and self-defence; need to keep

military treaty obligations; need to secure adequate manpower in the military; importance external security.

105 Military: Negative

Favourable mentions of decreasing military expenditures; disarmament; 'evils of war'; promises to reduce conscription; otherwise as 104, but negative.

106 Peace

Peace as a general goal; declarations of belief in peace and peaceful means of solving crises; desirability of countries joining in negotiations with hostile countries.

107 Internationalism: Positive

Need for international co-operation; co-operation with specific countries other than those coded in 101; need for aid to developing countries; need for world planning of resources; need for international courts; support for any international goal or world state; support for UN.

109 Internationalism: Negative

Favourable mentions of national independence and sovereignty as opposed to internationalism; otherwise as 107, but negative.

Policy Domain 2: Freedom and Democracy

201 Freedom and Human Rights

Favourable mentions of importance of personal freedom and civil rights; freedom from bureaucratic control; freedom of speech; freedom from coercion in the

political and economic spheres; individualism in the manifesto country and in other

countries.

202   Democracy

Favourable mentions of democracy as a method or goal in national and other

organisations; involvement of all citizens in decision-making as well as generalised

support for the manifesto country's democracy.

203   Constitutionalism: Positive

Support for specific aspects of the constitution; use of constitutionalism as an

argument for policy as well as general approval of the constitutional way of doing

things.

204   Constitutionalism: Negative

Opposition to the constitution in general or to specific aspects; otherwise as 203,

but negative.

Policy Domain 3: Political System

301   Decentralisation

Support for federalism or devolution; more regional autonomy for policy or

economy; support for keeping up local and regional customs and symbols; favourable

mentions of special consideration for local areas; deference to local expertise;

favourable mentions of the territorial subsidiary principle.

302   Centralisation

Opposition to political decision-making at lower political levels; support for more centralisation in political and administrative procedures; otherwise as 301, but negative.

303   Governmental and Administrative Efficiency

Need for efficiency and economy in government and administration; cutting down civil service; improving governmental procedures; general appeal to make the process of government and administration cheaper and more effective.

304   Political Corruption

Need to eliminate corruption, and associated abuse, in political and public life.

305   Political Authority

Favourable mentions of strong government, including government stability; manifesto party's competence to govern and/or other party's lack of such competence.

Policy Domain 4: Economy

401   Free Enterprise

Favourable mentions of free enterprise capitalism; superiority of individual enterprise over state and control systems; favourable mentions of private property rights, personal enterprise and initiative; need for unhampered individual enterprises.

402   Incentives

Need for wage and tax policies to induce enterprise; encouragement to start enterprises; need for financial and other incentives such as subsidies.

403   Market Regulation

Need for regulations designed to make private enterprises work better; actions against monopolies and trusts, and in defence of consumer and small business; encouraging economic competition; social market economy.

404   Economic Planning

Favourable mentions of long-standing economic planning of a consultative or indicative nature, need for government to create such a plan.

405   Corporatism

Favourable mentions of the need for the collaboration of employers and trade union organisations in overall economic planning and direction through the medium of tripartite bodies of government, employers, and trade unions.

406   Protectionism: Positive

Favourable mentions of extension or maintenance of tariffs to protect internal markets; other domestic economic protectionism such as quota restrictions; in favour of export subsidies.

407   Protectionism: Negative

Support for the concept of free trade; otherwise as 406, but negative.

408   Economic Goals

Statements of intent to pursue any economic goals not covered by other categories in Domain 4. This category is created to catch an overall interest of parties in economics and, therefore, covers a variety of economic goals.

409   Keynesian Demand Management

Favourable mentions of demand-oriented economic policy; economic policy devoted to the reduction of depressions and/or to increase private demand through increasing public demand and/or through increasing social expenditures.

410   Productivity

Need to encourage or facilitate greater production; need to take measures to aid this; appeal for greater production and importance of productivity to the economy; the paradigm of growth.

411   Technology and Infrastructure

Importance of modernisation of industry and methods of transport and communication; importance of science and technological developments in industry; need for training and research. This does not imply education in general (see category 506). This also covers public spending on infrastructure such as streets and harbours.

412   Controlled Economy

General need for direct government control of economy; control over prices, wages, rents, etc.; state intervention into the economic system.

413   Nationalisation

Favourable mentions of government ownership, partial or complete, including government ownership of land.

414   Economic Orthodoxy

Need for traditional economic orthodoxy, e.g. reduction of budget deficits, retrenchment in crisis, thrift and savings; support for traditional economic institutions such as stock market and banking system; support for strong currency.

415   Marxist Analysis

Positive references (typically but not necessary by communist parties) to the specific use of Marxist-Leninist terminology and analysis of situations which are otherwise uncodable.

416   Anti-Growth Economy

Favourable mentions of anti-growth politics and steady state economy; sustainable development.

Policy Domain 5: Welfare and Quality of Life

501   Environmental Protection

Preservation of countryside, forests, etc.; general preservation of natural resources against selfish interests; proper use of national parks; soil banks, etc; environmental improvement.

502   Culture

Need to provide cultural and leisure facilities including arts and sport; need to spend money on museums, art galleries etc.; need to encourage worthwhile leisure activities and cultural mass media.

503   Social Justice

Concept of equality; need for fair treatment of all people; special protection for underprivileged; need for fair distribution of resources; removal of class barriers; end of discrimination such as racial or sexual discrimination, etc.

504   Welfare State Expansion

Favourable mentions of need to introduce, maintain or expand any social service or social security scheme; support for social services such as health service or social housing. Note: This category excludes education.

505   Welfare State Limitation

Limiting expenditure on social services or social security; favourable mentions of the social subsidiary principle; otherwise as 504, but negative.

506   Education Expansion

Need to expand and/or improve educational provision at all levels. This excludes technical training which is coded under 411.

507   Education Limitation

Limiting expenditure on education; otherwise as 506, but negative.

Policy Domain 6: Fabric of Society

601   National Way of Life: Positive

Appeals to patriotism and/or nationalism; suspension of some freedoms in order to protect the state against subversion; support for established national ideas.

602   National Way of Life: Negative

Against patriotism and/or nationalism; opposition to the existing national state; otherwise as 601, but negative.

603   Traditional Morality: Positive

Favourable mentions of traditional moral values; prohibition, censorship and suppression of immorality and unseemly behaviour; maintenance and stability of family; religion.

604   Traditional Morality: Negative

Opposition to traditional moral values; support for divorce, abortion etc.; otherwise as 603, but negative.

605   Law and Order

Enforcement of all laws; actions against crime; support and resources for police; tougher attitudes in courts; importance of internal security.

606   Social Harmony

Appeal for national effort and solidarity; need for society to see itself as united; appeal for public spiritedness; decrying anti-social attitudes in times of crisis; support

for the public interest; favourable mention of the civil society (Note: This category neither captures what your country can do for you nor what you can do for your country, but what you can do for your fellow citizens.).

607   Multiculturalism: Positive

Favourable mentions of cultural diversity, communalism, cultural plurality and pillarization; preservation of autonomy of religious, linguistic heritages within the country including special educational provisions.

608   Multiculturalism: Negative

Enforcement or encouragement of cultural integration; otherwise as 607, but negative.

Policy Domain 7: Social Groups

701   Labour Groups: Positive

Favourable references to labour groups, working class, unemployed; support for trade unions; good treatment of manual and other employees.

702   Labour Groups: Negative

Negative references to trade unions such as 'abuse of power'; otherwise as 701, but negative.

703   Agriculture and Farmers

Support for agriculture and farmers; any policy aimed specifically at benefiting these.

704   Middle Class and Professional Groups

Favourable references to middle class, professional groups, such as physicians or lawyers; old and new middle class.

705   Underprivileged Minority Groups

Favourable references to underprivileged minorities who are defined neither in economic nor in demographic terms, e.g. the handicapped, homosexuals, immigrants, etc.

706   Non-economic Demographic Groups

Favourable mentions of, or need for, assistance to women, old people, young people, linguistic groups, etc; special interest groups of all kinds.

GOP Principles

I Believe… The proper function of government is to do for the people those things that have to be done but cannot be done, or cannot be done as well, by individuals, and that the most effective government is government closest to the people.

I Believe… Good government is based upon the individual and that each person's ability, dignity, freedom, and responsibility must be honored and recognized.

I Believe… The free enterprise and the encouragement of individual initiative and incentive have given this nation an economic system second to none.

I Believe… Sound money management should be our goal.

I Believe… In equal right, equal justice and equal opportunity for all, regardless of race, creed, age, sex or national origin.

I Believe… We must retain those principles of the past worth retaining, yet always be receptive to new ideas with an outlook broad enough to accommodate thoughtful change and varying points of view.

I Believe… That Americans value and should preserve their feeling of national strength and pride, and at the same time share with people everywhere a desire for peace and freedom and the extension of human rights throughout the world.

I Believe… The Republican Party is the best vehicle for translating these ideals into positive and successful principles of government.

** This do file has all of the code for the issue ownership chapter. Use the file named: Issue Ownership Data.**

** First, there are 6 tests of IO theory. Use the Democratic SPP sheet and the Republican SPP sheet and run all 6 tests separately. This will indicate what percentage of coding units in each state party platform address each set of issues - D-owned, R-owned, performance, or other.**

*****Issue Ownership Test 1 - simple test, categories divided by me*****

** Generate variables for Dem-owned, Rep-owned, and performance issues. Economic issues are coded with appropriate party.**

gen IODem1 = (per103+ per105+ per107+ per201+ per302+ per403+ per412+ per413+ per501+ per502 + per503 +per504+ per506+ per604+ per606+ per607+ per701+ per703+ per704+ per705+per407+ per 416)

gen IORep1 = (per104 +per109 +per301 +per303 +per401 +per505 +per507 +per603 +per605 +per608 +per702 +per402 +per406+ per200 +per414 +per508)

gen IOPerf1 = (per101 +per102 +per106 +per404 +per405 +per408 +per409 + per410)

gen IOOther1 = (per202 +per203 +per204 +per304 +per305 +per411 +per415 +per601 +per602 +per706)

** Generate variable for the denominator - to determine % that falls into each category.**

gen total1 = (per103+ per105+ per107+ per201+ per302+ per403+ per412+ per413+ per501+ per502 + per503 +per504+ per506+ per604+ per606+ per607+ per701+ per703+ per704+ per705+per407+ per 416 +per104 +per109 +per301 +per303 +per401 +per505 +per507 +per603 +per605 +per608 +per702 +per402 +per406+ per200 +per414 +per508 +per101 +per102 +per106 +per404 +per405 +per408 +per409 + per410 +per202 +per203 +per204 +per304 +per305 +per411 +per415 +per601 +per602 +per706)

** Generate % of coding units in platform focusing on each category of issues. Denominator is the sum of all coding categories**

gen Dfocus = (IODem1 / total1)

summarize Dfocus

gen Rfocus = (IORep1 / total1)

summarize Rfocus

gen Perffocus = (IOPerf1 / total1)

summarize Perffocus

gen Ofocus = (IOOther1 / total1)

summarize Ofocus

*****Issue Ownership Test 2 - simple test, categories divided by me, with economic issues moved from D & R to Performance. Economic issues in "other" left alone*****

** Generate variables for owned issues and performance issues, but economic issues from Dem and Rep categories are coded as performance.**

gen IODem2 = (per103+ per105+ per107+ per201+ per302 + per501+ per502 + per503 +per504+ per506+ per604+ per606+ per607+ per701+ per703+ per704+ per705)

gen IORep2 = (per104 +per109 +per301 +per303 +per505 +per507 +per603 +per605 +per608 +per702 + per200 +per508)

gen IOPerf2 = (per101 +per102 +per106 +per404 +per405 +per408 +per409 + per410+ per403+ per412+ per413+per407+ per 416+ per401 +per402 +per406 +per414)

gen IOOther2 = (per202 +per203 +per204 +per304 +per305 +per411 +per415 +per601 +per602 +per706)

** Generate variable for the denominator - to determine % that falls into each category.**

gen total2 = (per103+ per105+ per107+ per201+ per302+ per403+ per412+ per413+ per501+ per502 + per503 +per504+ per506+ per604+ per606+ per607+ per701+ per703+ per704+ per705+per407+ per 416 +per104 +per109 +per301 +per303 +per401 +per505 +per507 +per603 +per605 +per608 +per702 +per402 +per406+ per200 +per414 +per508 +per101 +per102 +per106 +per404 +per405 +per408 +per409 + per410 +per202 +per203 +per204 +per304 +per305 +per411 +per415 +per601 +per602 +per706)

** Generate % of coding units in platform focusing on each category of issues. Denominator is the sum of all coding categories**

gen Dfocus2 = (IODem2 / total2)

summarize Dfocus2

gen Rfocus2 = (IORep2 / total2)

summarize Rfocus2

gen Perffocus2 = (IOPerf2 / total2)

summarize Perffocus2

gen Ofocus2 = (IOOther2 / total2)

summarize Ofocus2

*****Issue Ownership Test 3 - ALL economic issues are moved to the

performance category*****

** Generate variables for owned and performance issues, but all economic

issues are coded as performance, even from the "other" category.**

gen IODem3 = (per103+ per105+ per107+ per201+ per302 + per501+ per502 +

per503 +per504+ per506+ per604+ per606+ per607+ per701+ per703+ per704+ per705)

gen IORep3 = (per104 +per109 +per301 +per303 +per505 +per507 +per603

+per605 +per608 +per702 + per200 +per508)

gen IOPerf3 = (per101 +per102 +per106 +per404 +per405 +per408 +per409 +

per410+ per403+ per412+ per413+per407+ per 416+ per401 +per402 +per406

+per414+per411 +per415)

gen IOOther3 = (per202 +per203 +per204 +per304 +per305 +per601 +per602

+per706)

** Generate variable for the denominator - to determine % that falls into each

category.**

gen total3 = (per103+ per105+ per107+ per201+ per302+ per403+ per412+

per413+ per501+ per502 + per503 +per504+ per506+ per604+ per606+ per607+

per701+ per703+ per704+ per705+per407+ per 416 +per104 +per109 +per301 +per303

+per401 +per505 +per507 +per603 +per605 +per608 +per702 +per402 +per406+ per200

+per414 +per508 +per101 +per102 +per106 +per404 +per405 +per408 +per409 +

per410 +per202 +per203 +per204 +per304 +per305 +per411 +per415 +per601 +per602

+per706)

** Generate % of coding units in platform focusing on each category of issues.

Denominator is the sum of all coding categories**

gen Dfocus3 = (IODem3 / total3)

summarize Dfocus3

gen Rfocus3 = (IORep3 / total3)

summarize Rfocus3

gen Perffocus3 = (IOPerf3 / total3)

summarize Perffocus3

gen Ofocus3 = (IOOther3 / total3)

summarize Ofocus3

*****Issue Ownership Test 4 - simple test, categories divided by me (excludes

"other category)*****

** Generate variables for Dem-owned, Rep-owned, and performance issues.

Economic issues are coded with appropriate party.**

gen IODem4 = (per103+ per105+ per107+ per201+ per302+ per403+ per412+ per413+ per501+ per502 + per503 +per504+ per506+ per604+ per606+ per607+ per701+ per703+ per704+ per705+per407+ per 416)

gen IORep4 = (per104 +per109 +per301 +per303 +per401 +per505 +per507 +per603 +per605 +per608 +per702 +per402 +per406+ per200 +per414 +per508)

gen IOPerf4 = (per101 +per102 +per106 +per404 +per405 +per408 +per409 + per410)

** Generate variable for the denominator - to determine % that falls into each category.**

gen total4 = (per103+ per105+ per107+ per201+ per302+ per403+ per412+ per413+ per501+ per502 + per503 +per504+ per506+ per604+ per606+ per607+ per701+ per703+ per704+ per705+per407+ per 416 +per104 +per109 +per301 +per303 +per401 +per505 +per507 +per603 +per605 +per608 +per702 +per402 +per406+ per200 +per414 +per508 +per101 +per102 +per106 +per404 +per405 +per408 +per409 + per410)

** Generate % of coding units in platform focusing on each category of issues. Denominator is the sum of all coding categories**

gen Dfocus4 = (IODem4 / total4)

summarize Dfocus4

gen Rfocus4 = (IORep4 / total4)

summarize Rfocus4

gen Perffocus4 = (IOPerf4 / total4)

summarize Perffocus4

*****Issue Ownership Test 5 - simple test, categories divided by me, with economic issues moved from D & R to Performance. Economic issues in "other" left alone (excludes "other category)*****

** Generate variables for owned issues and performance issues, but economic issues from Dem and Rep categories are coded as performance.**

gen IODem5 = (per103+ per105+ per107+ per201+ per302 + per501+ per502 + per503 +per504+ per506+ per604+ per606+ per607+ per701+ per703+ per704+ per705)

gen IORep5 = (per104 +per109 +per301 +per303 +per505 +per507 +per603 +per605 +per608 +per702 + per200 +per508)

gen IOPerf5 = (per101 +per102 +per106 +per404 +per405 +per408 +per409 + per410+ per403+ per412+ per413+per407+ per 416+ per401 +per402 +per406 +per414)

** Generate variable for the denominator - to determine % that falls into each category.

gen total5 = (per103+ per105+ per107+ per201+ per302 + per501+ per502 + per503 +per504+ per506+ per604+ per606+ per607+ per701+ per703+ per704+ per705 +per104 +per109 +per301 +per303 +per505 +per507 +per603 +per605 +per608 +per702 + per200 +per508 +per101 +per102 +per106 +per404 +per405 +per408 +per409 + per410+ per403+ per412+ per413+per407+ per 416+ per401 +per402 +per406 +per414)

** Generate % of coding units in platform focusing on each category of issues. Denominator is the sum of all coding categories**

gen Dfocus5 = (IODem5 / total5)

170

summarize Dfocus5

gen Rfocus5 = (IORep5 / total5)

summarize Rfocus5

gen Perffocus5 = (IOPerf5 / total5)

summarize Perffocus5

*****Issue Ownership Test 6 - ALL economic issues are moved to the

performance category (excludes "other category)*****

** Generate variables for owned and performance issues, but all economic

issues are coded as performance, even from the "other" category.**

gen IODem6 = (per103+ per105+ per107+ per201+ per302 + per501+ per502 +

per503 +per504+ per506+ per604+ per606+ per607+ per701+ per703+ per704+ per705)

gen IORep6 = (per104 +per109 +per301 +per303 +per505 +per507 +per603

+per605 +per608 +per702 + per200 +per508)

gen IOPerf6 = (per101 +per102 +per106 +per404 +per405 +per408 +per409 +

per410+ per403+ per412+ per413+per407+ per 416+ per401 +per402 +per406

+per414+per411 +per415)

** Generate variable for the denominator - to determine % that falls into each

category.**

gen total6 = (per103+ per105+ per107+ per201+ per302+ per403+ per412+

per413+ per501+ per502 + per503 +per504+ per506+ per604+ per606+ per607+

per701+ per703+ per704+ per705+per407+ per 416 +per104 +per109 +per301 +per303

+per401 +per505 +per507 +per603 +per605 +per608 +per702 +per402 +per406+ per200

+per414 +per508 +per101 +per102 +per106 +per404 +per405 +per408 +per409 +

per410 +per411 +per415)

** Generate % of coding units in platform focusing on each category of issues.

Denominator is the sum of all coding categories**

gen Dfocus6 = (IODem6 / total6)

summarize Dfocus6

gen Rfocus6 = (IORep6 / total6)

summarize Rfocus6

gen Perffocus6 = (IOPerf6 / total6)

summarize Perffocus6

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